INIVERSAL
LIBRARY

107 006

JNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

MY YEARS WITH CHURCHILL

My Years with CHURCHILL

Norman McGowan

BRITISH BOOK CENTRE · NEW YORK

1958

© 1958 Norman McGowan
All rights reserved

No part may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publishers except by a reviewer who wishes to quote brief passages for the purposes of a review

Contents

	Page
I Meet a Great Man	11
The Daily Round	20
Chartwell Manor	28
Family Life	35
His Personal Possessions	45
In Relaxation	52
The Artist	59
His Love for Animals	66
The Man and His Clothes	77
The Inner Man	87
Matters of Health	94
Holiday Adventures	100
Guest of the King of Denmark	109
Friendships	116
Inside Number Ten	126
In Canada and the U.S.A.	133
At Hyde Park Gate	141
His Wit in Wisdom	148
The Man at Work	157

Illustrations

Between pages 16 and 17

The author reading one of Sir Winston's books which he presented to him. *Inset:* the inscription written on the flyleaf.

Sir Winston Churchill in one of his favourite uniforms, that of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.

The lovely Manor of Chartwell, Sir Winston's favourite house, nestling deep in the Kentish countryside.

Part of the gardens of Chartwell. The garden wall seen on each side of the pavilion is almost wholly Sir Winston's own work.

Partners in a happy, perfect marriage: Sir Winston Churchill with his beloved "Clemmie," his adviser, critic, inspiration and adored helpmate over a period of fifty years.

Between pages 48 and 49

Rufus, the French poodle who is the inseparable companion of Sir Winston.

Norman McGowan with Rufus.

Why Tell? as a foal on the Chartwell farm greets the author.

Sir Winston greets Colonist II, by far his most successful horse.

Mickey, the Chartwell farm cat, who could make the Guv'nor's day.

Some of the famous black swans, a gift from Australia, on one of the lakes at Chartwell.

Sir Winston with Canyon Kid. This horse dropped dead with heart failure to the sorrow and consternation of his owner.

Grandfather for the eighth time. Sir Winston at the christening of Jeremy Soames in August, 1952. Also in this family group is the baby's godfather, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery.

Two Winston Churchills. The Guv'nor with his grandson, the son of Randolph Churchill.

Randolph Churchill greeting his father at a ceremony of the Cinque Ports.

Anthony Eden with his wife Clarissa.

With another of his grandsons—Nicholas Soames.

Between pages 80 and 81

North African tribesmen gather round the plane which took Mr. Churchill for his holiday at Marrakesh.

Mr. Churchill admiring the mounts of the specially chosen cavalry guard ordered to protect him during his North African holiday.

Every day on holiday in Morocco, McGowan had to set up a draught excluder and a sunshade in the remote mountain area where his master wanted to paint.

The scene in a gorge of the Atlas Mountains which was the subject of one of the Churchill oil paintings.

The owner of this shop in Marrakesh found it more lucrative to let his shop to a famous artist than to sell his Coca Cola and selection of trinkets.

This scene was the basis of a painting in oils by Mr. Churchill which he titled " Eureka."

The little black goat which became Mr. Churchill's firm friend until its untimely death necessitated a deception which failed!

More painting on holiday: this time in Madeira, a stay cut short by the need to rush back for a General Election.

Between pages 112 and 113

Mr. and Mrs. Churchill relaxing on holiday.

Despite playful splashing of the cameras by Mr. Churchill one pressman managed to get this shot at the Lido, Venice.

Friendships which were forged in war and have flourished in peace: Mr. Churchill with General Eisenhower and Field Marshal Montgomery at an El Alamein Reunion.

The Guv'nor with the man whose patriotism and drive he relied on in two world wars—Lord Beaverbrook—driving from Nice airport to the latter's Riviera villa.

Two elder statesmen: Sir Winston Churchill and Mr. Bernard Baruch. Great friends, each regarded the other as the leading authority on world politics.

Another great friend in the land he loves and respects perhaps second only to his own: Mr. Churchill chats to President Truman during his U.S. visit.

The King of Denmark whose tattooed skin His Majesty proudly described to McGowan during Mr. Churchill's visit to Denmark.

Mr. Churchill bids goodbye to the Duke of Windsor after the latter's visit to Downing Street.

To Sir Winston the Commonwealth is a living entity. Constant personal contacts are his watchword. Here during his visit to Canada he confers with Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, United Kingdom High Commissioner; A. Adrian Roberts, High Commissioner for South Africa; and R. R. Saksena, of Pakistan.

Between pages 144 and 145

A happy trio at a dinner in Washington when Miss Margaret Truman, singer, and Miss Sarah Churchill, actress, chat with Mr. Churchill, artist.

A charming gesture by the Danish royal family to the Guv'nor's valet: a presentation picture of the King and Queen of Denmark with their two British guests.

Canada gives the Guv'nor a truly Canadian welcome when his train arrives at Ottawa. Mounties escorting him through the cheering crowds.

The man who saw at first hand the sacrifices of the Canadian Armies in Western Europe pays tribute to their dead with Louis St. Laurent in Parliament Building, Ottawa.

The Hon. Academician Extraordinary of the Royal Academy in happy mood among notabilities and artists at the annual dinner of the R.A.

One of the comparatively few weddings Sir Winston has attended was the marriage of the Marquess of Blandford to Miss Susan Hornby in 1951. The Marquess is heir to the dukedom of Marlborough.

Receiving the freedom of Nancy, France. This was an occasion when French diplomacy delighted and impressed Mr. Churchill after he had appeared wearing a French decoration incorrectly.

The Guv'nor's custom of suddenly deciding to wear somewhat unusual but deeply traditional uniforms from the vast array to which he was entitled often presented urgent problems to his valet.

The author and publishers wish to acknowledge with thanks permission to reproduce photographs from

Associated Press; P.A.; Reuter; Hulton Press; Keystone; Central Press; George King Ltd.; Kent Messenger; Black Star; Paul Popper; Sunday Pictorial.

Dedicated to the fortunate few who over the years have been privileged to serve a Great Man.

I Meet a Great Man

FOR a long time I have pondered on an invitation to set down my experiences during my memorable and momentous years as personal servant to Mr. Winston Churchill, as he then was.

I have decided to do this because I believe " my beloved Guv'nor's " life belongs to the world. It is perhaps the penalty of greatness that the personal life is inextricably mixed up with the public one.

Like everyone else who has come into personal contact with Sir Winston Churchill I became his devoted admirer. The man is of such a grandiose and complex character that one yearns to know more. No bookworm by nature, I felt impelled to read Sir Winston Churchill's own outstanding contributions to literature and history, and some of the innumerable biographies, diaries and histories which exist about him.

Curiously enough, in view of the flood of words which has poured out over more than fifty years, there seems to be a dearth of description of Churchill—the Man.

The soldier, the political renegade, the Cabinet Minister, the statesman, the outcast, the saviour of Western civilisation, the painter, the author, the Grand Old Man full of honours and esteem—millions of words describe all these facets of an amazing life.

But of Churchill the human being I think there has been a strange and inexplicable shortage of words. An eighteenth century French wit said " no man is a hero to his valet."

In the twentieth century one was.

As a man of twenty-five I went into my employment quite open-minded. When Mr. Churchill became the idol of seven-eighths of the world in 1940 I was only fifteen and too young to know whether the reputation was justified or not. As a member of the restless, somewhat cynical post-war generation Mr. Churchill did, indeed, stand for many things which I believed old-fashioned and outmoded in the middle of the twentieth century.

But as the weeks and months went by my downright North Country attitude to my fellow men told me that "here was a man."

This brief and unskilled account has no literary pretensions. Nor is there anything sensational or melodramatic in it. Such jaundiced enemies as Sir Winston Churchill may have will look in vain for "keyhole" revelations or details to show that my idol had feet of clay.

Not that I would have qualms in reporting idiosyncrasies and faults for fear of repercussions. Freedom is not just a word in the Churchill menage. It is practised. I have had no restrictions on saying or writing whatever I will, and it would have been completely out of character if my Guv'nor ever made such stipulations on freedom of action or freedom of speech for those who have served him.

Yet what I set down does concern the private life of my Guv'nor. It is all that I am in a position to describe, for the public side of his life is better left to more professional pens than mine.

If I show that Sir Winston Churchill is a very human person, as memorable and great behind the façade of the public figure as he is in front of it, I shall be well satisfied with my small contribution to a record of the kind of man who but rarely embellishes the story of mankind.

I count myself particularly fortunate in becoming the personal servant of Mr. Churchill in the years which surely mark the climax of his long and distinguished career, just

prior to his retirement as an active member of the Government. I was not only fortunate in being engaged by such a distinguished employer, but also in becoming a valet at all, because, until I reported to Chartwell, I had no experience whatever of the work involved. I lived in my birthplace of St. Helens, Lancashire, until I joined the Navy in 1942, when I was seventeen years old. Until then I had worked in the world-famous glass works which provides employment for many thousands of people in the town.

Upon joining the Royal Navy, I was sent to H.M.S. *Ganges* at Ipswich for training, and then to one of the U.S. destroyers loaned to Britain, the *Labuan*. Shortly afterwards I was transferred to the *Wild Goose* under Captain Walker. Most of the time we were on convoy duty in the Atlantic, and sometimes on the Far East run. When V.J. Day occurred I was on the *Swiftsure* in the Indian Ocean, and I came home on the aircraft carrier *Formidable* and was demobilised on July 2, 1946.

As a recently married man, my chief worry when I returned to civilian life was that of so many men with my problem—that of obtaining a house.

A job which provided accommodation meant more than the wages involved, and it was for that reason that I became a manservant in Lord Derby's house at Knowsley. My family had connections through working on the estate, so that when I applied for the post, the fact that I had not any experience was outweighed by the knowledge my prospective employer had about me.

Little did I know at the time that taking this job, frankly in order to have a home for my wife and myself, would in a very short time result in my engagement as the valet to the greatest man of our times.

It happened like this. Mr. Churchill came to make a speech at Liverpool and stayed at Knowsley as the guest of Lord and Lady Derby. While he was there his butler,

As a man of twenty-five I went into my employment quite open-minded. When Mr. Churchill became the idol of seven-eighths of the world in 1940 I was only fifteen and too young to know whether the reputation was justified or not. As a member of the restless, somewhat cynical post-war generation Mr. Churchill did, indeed, stand for many things which I believed old-fashioned and outmoded in the middle of the twentieth century.

But as the weeks and months went by my downright North Country attitude to my fellow men told me that "here was a man."

This brief and unskilled account has no literary pretensions. Nor is there anything sensational or melodramatic in it. Such jaundiced enemies as Sir Winston Churchill may have will look in vain for "keyhole" revelations or details to show that my idol had feet of clay.

Not that I would have qualms in reporting idiosyncrasies and faults for fear of repercussions. Freedom is not just a word in the Churchill menage. It is practised. I have had no restrictions on saying or writing whatever I will, and it would have been completely out of character if my Guv'nor ever made such stipulations on freedom of action or freedom of speech for those who have served him.

Yet what I set down does concern the private life of my Guv'nor. It is all that I am in a position to describe, for the public side of his life is better left to more professional pens than mine.

If I show that Sir Winston Churchill is a very human person, as memorable and great behind the façade of the public figure as he is in front of it, I shall be well satisfied with my small contribution to a record of the kind of man who but rarely embellishes the story of mankind.

I count myself particularly fortunate in becoming the personal servant of Mr. Churchill in the years which surely mark the climax of his long and distinguished career, just

prior to his retirement as an active member of the Government. I was not only fortunate in being engaged by such a distinguished employer, but also in becoming a valet at all, because, until I reported to Chartwell, I had no experience whatever of the work involved. I lived in my birthplace of St. Helens, Lancashire, until I joined the Navy in 1942, when I was seventeen years old. Until then I had worked in the world-famous glass works which provides employment for many thousands of people in the town.

Upon joining the Royal Navy, I was sent to H.M.S. *Ganges* at Ipswich for training, and then to one of the U.S. destroyers loaned to Britain, the *Labuan*. Shortly afterwards I was transferred to the *Wild Goose* under Captain Walker. Most of the time we were on convoy duty in the Atlantic, and sometimes on the Far East run. When V.J. Day occurred I was on the *Swiftsure* in the Indian Ocean, and I came home on the aircraft carrier *Formidable* and was demobilised on July 2, 1946.

As a recently married man, my chief worry when I returned to civilian life was that of so many men with my problem—that of obtaining a house.

A job which provided accommodation meant more than the wages involved, and it was for that reason that I became a manservant in Lord Derby's house at Knowsley. My family had connections through working on the estate, so that when I applied for the post, the fact that I had not any experience was outweighed by the knowledge my prospective employer had about me.

Little did I know at the time that taking this job, frankly in order to have a home for my wife and myself, would in a very short time result in my engagement as the valet to the greatest man of our times.

It happened like this. Mr. Churchill came to make a speech at Liverpool and stayed at Knowsley as the guest of Lord and Lady Derby. While he was there his butler,

Fred Raven, a man approaching his sixties who combined his normal duties with that of Mr. Churchill's personal servant, fell down the stairs and injured his leg. He had been a butler at Government House, Gibraltar, and was, of course, a very experienced man.

When it was realised that sustaining such an accident at his age might make the somewhat vigorous activities involved in travelling with Mr. Churchill to all parts of the world too much for him, it was provisionally suggested that I should be trained by him with a view to taking over the job.

I frankly could not believe that such a wonderful opportunity should come to me because there were surely thousands of experienced men—war-time batmen, for example—who would leap at such a chance, and when Mr. and Mrs. Churchill went off to Europe for a holiday, I believed that it would be very unlikely that I would hear anything more about it, even though I had been to the London residence at Hyde Park Gate and had a very pleasant interview with Mrs. Churchill.

However, even on holiday, Mrs. Churchill did not forget me and in the characterstic and superb manner in which she runs the Churchill household, a note came from her private secretary, Miss Penelope Hampden Wall.

The letter came from Gardone on Lake Garda, Italy, and I received it early in August. It read as follows:

" Dear Mr. McGowan,

" Mrs. Churchill has asked me to write to you and say that she had a nice letter from Mr. Twin, and that she and Mr. Churchill would like you to come to them when they return to England, probably about the middle of September. As soon as it is possible to give you a definite date I will do so.

" To confirm your conversation with Mrs. Churchill, you would come singly for one month on trial, without

Mrs. McGowan. At the end of the first month, if everything were satisfactory, she could then join you.

"Mrs. Churchill and I will be back at Hyde Park Gate in two weeks, while Mr. Churchill goes on to Strasbourg and other places on the Continent. If there are any questions you wish to ask you can write to me here, or in London after about August 16th."

And so, in September 1949, I reported for duty at Chartwell. The atmosphere of the place was friendly from the moment I stepped inside and was made welcome by the staff.

As I unpacked my belongings in the pleasant and comfortable room allotted to me, I became more and more nervous about the imminent meeting with Mr. Churchill. I knew that he expected, and received, perfect service from those who worked for him. I feared that my lack of experience would exasperate him, and I had only a vague idea of my duties.

All that I had really been told was that I would be expected to take charge of my master's clothes and to look after his painting equipment, for which I would receive £5 per week plus, of course, board, lodging and any expenses involved.

Nothing more had been said so it was with some qualms that I left my room and asked a maid to see if I could have my first interview and report for duty.

I was shown into the book-lined study and for a few moments I stood waiting in front of a man sitting at the paper-strewn table. I thought this was probably one of the secretaries I had been told about. Then the man looked up. It was Mr. Churchill himself.

He stood up and came forward to shake hands. He spoke softly.

"So you are Norman," he said. "You are going to look after me."

For a brief moment he studied me with a piercing, all-embracing glance. Then he said: "I think we will get along all right."

It was the shortest interview I had ever had.

Nervously I asked Mr. Churchill for a few details about what I should have to do. But I was his first full-time —and totally inexperienced—valet, and he could not answer my questions.

He just relit his cigar and said: "We'll work it out as we go along. Anyway, let's go and see Mrs. Churchill. She'll know."

We went along the corridor to the drawing room.

"This is Norman," Mr. Churchill said. "He is going to look after me."

Mrs. Churchill gave me only two instructions.

"See that he is on time for meals and appointments. See that he wears an overcoat when it is cold."

Very soon I was to find out how difficult it was to obey these instructions.

On the following morning Mr. Churchill rang for me and said:

"Where are the morning papers?"

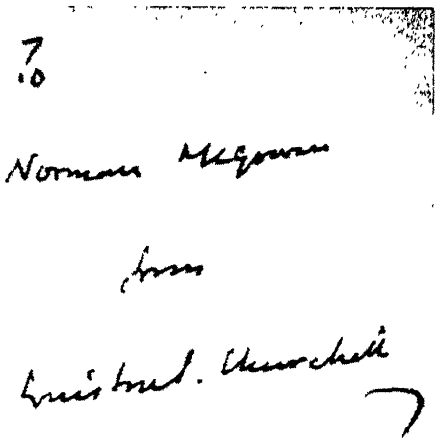
I hurried downstairs to fetch them, but I was just beaten to it by a maidservant. When I demanded the papers she laughed and dashed off with them to Mrs. Churchill's room.

I went back to explain to Mr. Churchill.

He said: "I must have the morning papers in bed. Go and get some of them."

After several visits to Mrs. Churchill's room I managed to get a few pages that she had looked at. I was determined this situation should not happen again.

From that morning onwards I listened for the paper boy's ring and then raced the maid, whose name was Martia, to the front door. Usually I won.



The author reading one of Sir Winston's books which he presented to him. *Inset:* the inscription written on the flyleaf.

52

Winston Churchill in one of his favourite uniforms, that of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.

The lovely Manor of Chartwell, Sir Winston's favourite house, nestling deep in the Kentish countryside.

Part of the gardens of Chartwell. The garden wall seen on each side of the pavilion is almost wholly Sir Winston's own work

Partners in a happy, perfect marriage: Sir Winston Churchill with his beloved "Clemmie," his adviser, critic, inspiration and adored helpmate over a period of fifty years.

But when I lost I had to get them—sometimes page by page—from Mrs. Churchill. That made the Guv'nor furious. However, after a few weeks of this daily battle I found the answer. I ordered two sets of papers every day and tempers improved.

I wish there had been such an easy solution to the problems of making my Guv'nor wear an overcoat out of doors and keeping him on time for meals and appointments. Whatever Mrs. Churchill said to him, he always used to try to sneak out of the house without his coat, although the late autumn days were very chilly that year.

I had to lie in wait for him at the door and practically force him into it.

Mrs. Churchill's instruction about punctuality was almost impossible to carry out.

The Guv'nor's habit of being late for meals ought to have driven his wife to distraction. She enlisted my help in all sorts of tricks and dodges to get him to the meal table at the right time.

She would tell me: "Lunch will be at 1.45 p.m.—but tell Mr. Churchill the meal will be served at 1 p.m."

I would pass on the message, and Mr. Churchill would smile in a knowing way. Then he would appear in the dining room at 2 p.m.

Another trick Mrs. Churchill tried was to go into the Guv'nor's bedroom when he was not there and put the clock forward half an hour. The scheme never worked because Mr. Churchill always had two watches. The one he called his Day Watch chimed the hour and the nearest quarter when he pressed a button. Once he dropped it and he told me it cost £150 to have it repaired. His Night Watch was always at the side of his bed. He knew it never gained or lost a second.

My Guv'nor liked the people around him to show initiative. I think that the efforts I made with the papers, my obstinacy about his coat, and the barefaced lies I was prepared to tell him to get him down to luncheon both amused and impressed him, trivial as they were and so patently obvious.

My month's trial passed and I was told that I could bring my wife and baby daughter to live in a cottage close to the house.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Churchill interested themselves in getting my wife settled in, and the bliss of having a comfortable home of our own can only be imagined by couples who like us had wrestled with the heart-breaking difficulties of housing in the years after the war.

My wife and I soon learned of the deep humanity and kindness of my Guv'nor. My little daughter had been born incapacitated. I had made no mention of this, for it was to my mind a personal burden of no concern to my employers.

But with the child living on the estate Mr. Churchill soon saw the matter for himself. He wanted to ask Lord Moran for advice and he inferred in no uncertain terms that money was no object in obtaining the best possible medical aid.

It so happened, as I believe Lord Moran told him when they conferred about my daughter, that one of the best specialists in the country was a consultant at the hospital in Westerham, so that we could have the attention for our child that she needed through the National Health Service and at a hospital conveniently near.

My Guv'nor satisfied himself that this was true and so the generous help that I could have asked for without question was not needed.

So the weeks went by and I learned my duties, both

written and unwritten. Life was, needless to say, never boring and no day was the same as another, but there was a basic routine which had to be followed, a description of which will show better than anything else the secret of Sir Winston's energy and achievement year in and year out.

The Daily Round

DAILY life in the Churchill household naturally revolves around its head. Sir Winston is a tolerant and friendly employer, but needless to say his unique timetable for day-to-day activities and the "open house" maintained for colleagues, friends and relatives mean a busy day for the staff.

Chartwell naturally needed a larger staff than Hyde Park Gate or 10 Downing Street. Actually at the country residence were the cook, Mrs. Churchill's personal maid, two housemaids, a kitchen maid, and myself. The female staff, apart from the cook, were Swiss and had, by employment regulations, to be periodically changed.

This staff, it should be stressed, catered for the needs of the secretarial staff and the personal detectives who must always be within call. Six secretaries were employed on a rota system. Two were always off duty, two worked at Chartwell, and two at Hyde Park Gate. There was plenty of work to keep them busy throughout their working hours.

My own timetable will indicate the sort of daily routine which my Guv'nor followed. The first day was typical of the hundreds which followed it.

I entered the room and drew the curtains shortly after 8 a.m. Mr. Churchill was in bed, clad in a vest as is his usual habit, but he was already sitting up wearing a dressing gown.

He greeted me pleasantly, by no means the Great Man condescending to speak to the new and unimportant servant. He again expressed his belief that we would get

on all right together, and I think he was pleased to note that I had already learned the preliminary stages of the ritual which has to take place every morning.

On subsequent mornings he was more often than not still asleep when I entered his bedroom. I would never postpone it later than 8.30 a.m. I would shake him gently. Then I would stand back and wait. I knew his mood from that moment. If I got a grunt it was going to be one of the bad days. If he said "Good morning, Norman," it was going to be a good day.

As he sipped his orange juice which I immediately handed to him he would look out of the window. I always prayed for fine weather. After a moment or two he would go to the window in his dressing gown and if it was raining or cloudy he would curse the weather for several moments while I remade his bed.

Before he returned from the window, I had to place two pillows on the bed for his back—and then two large sponges for his elbows. He could not eat his breakfast from the desk-sized bed table unless the sponges were in position. He told me the table made his elbows sore.

Breakfast was usually finished not long after 9 a.m. and then the day's work began. My Guv'nor stayed in bed right up to lunchtime, but the fact that he was resting his body did not mean that his brain was inactive. In fact, the morning was the period when he got through the major part—and a phenomenal amount—of work. Although the heating system was automatic and worked perfectly, I invariably satisfied myself that the room was indeed at the demanded seventy-four degrees Fahrenheit.

The first duty of the day was to read through the newspapers. *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph* had first priority and he looked over the main news pages of these two before doing the same with the others.

Incidentally, he used to glance at the Communist *Daily Worker* along with the others.

He was fond of telling the story of a man trying to buy the *Daily Worker* at a street corner. "Sorry, mate," said the newsvendor, "I don't stock it. There's only his Grace and Milord that buys it these days."

As soon as he began reading the newspapers I handed to him two ball point pens, one with red ink and the other with blue. With these he marked items in the papers which were of interest to him, and which he might want to show someone later.

Anything of any political or personal importance, or even an item which was merely amusing, was specially marked and invariably I had to run downstairs with it to show it to Mrs. Churchill. Reading the papers took about one and half hours.

Then work really started. Mr. Churchill is an uncannily fast worker when he is writing whether it be a speech to be given at a political meeting or a new instalment for his books. For the latter it was quite usual for him to manage eight thousand words a day; often he would prefer to dictate straight on to a typewriter so that his secretaries had to be extremely efficient to keep up with him. He was, however, very considerate, and he always sensed when they were getting behind or getting flustered, and he could repeat word for word a sentence that he had dictated perhaps two or three minutes earlier.

This fantastic memory of his also had the result that it was quite impossible for any secretary who had missed some phrase or sentence to make up something which sounded right, for he would be bound to notice it.

While he worked with such speed, there was, as everyone knows from reading his speeches or his books, nothing slapdash about anything that he did. Revisions would

take place over and over again, and I have often seen Mr. Churchill literally groping in the air for the right word.

Unlike many writers who have an unjustified reputation for being able instinctively to say exactly what they mean with exactly the appropriate word, he did not use dictionaries or a thesaurus.

During these work sessions in bed Mr. Churchill's waste paper basket was a source of worry. It was placed alongside his ashtray, the ashtray being in the style of a metal waste paper basket of a kind used in a West End hotel which my Guv'nor saw, admired and had copied. There was always the danger that he would throw a lighted cigar into the wrong container and start a fire. He sometimes did and I used to douse the smouldering paper with a soda syphon.

If he happened to be reading galley proofs of his books, he had a pair of scissors at hand to cut out parts which he thought were wrong. The result was that at the end of the morning the bedroom looked like a waste paper warehouse.

At the side of his bed were three telephones, and at No. 10 and Chequers there was a scrambled set. They were very frequently used.

Shortly after noon I would begin to plan my campaign to get Mr. Churchill out of bed in time for luncheon. One of my most successful tricks was to go to the front door and ring the bell furiously.

Then I would dash back to Mr. Churchill and announce: "The guests have arrived."

Reluctantly he would dismiss the secretaries and say: "Norman, run my bath."

It was not as simple as that. He would lie back against the pillows and start revising proofs. An hour later he would still be in bed. I would replenish the bath again and again. No matter how long it took him to get to the

bathroom the temperature of the water always had to be just right.

I had to test it carefully with my elbow. Once he went to the bathroom without my seeing him just after I had filled it with very hot water, expecting him to delay things for half an hour while it cooled. He stepped in without testing it. He complained so violently that I ran away and hid until he had calmed down.

As soon as he got into the bath he would start muttering. At first I used to think he was talking to me.

I said: "Do you want me?"

"I wasn't talking to you, Norman," he replied. "I was addressing the House of Commons."

Then I realised the truth. The bath was where he thought out some of his important speeches.

He sometimes called one of the secretaries to the bathroom door if he thought up a particular point he wanted to have noted down, or he would suddenly jump out of the bath and rush to the bedroom telephone to make an important call. Quite a number of vital Government decisions have been made with Mr. Churchill standing dripping at the bedroom phone.

1 p.m.—time to get the Guv'nor out of his bath. It was almost as difficult as getting him out of bed. Long after he had finished washing he would wallow in the water, turning the taps on and off with his toes. Often Mrs. Churchill would hammer on the bathroom door and shout: "Norman, please do something about Mr. Churchill. The guests are waiting."

Whatever time he had agreed that luncheon should be it was invariable that he came into the room a few minutes later than he had said and all sorts of tricks were adopted both by Mrs. Churchill and the cook to overcome this.

My Guv'nor was perfectly aware that he was told white lies about how late it was, and with a twinkle in his eye

used deliberately to glance through a newspaper or have a brief stroll round the grounds simply to show that if he intended to be late for the meal there was nothing anybody could do about it.

Getting the Guv'nor dressed was another problem. He would put on his silk vest and underpants and while I was getting his trousers ready he would call to a secretary and start work again. I would hover with his trousers until he finished dictating.

By the time I got Mr. Churchill to the dining room his guests had usually been waiting anything up to an hour.

He always apologised profusely. Then he would call me in and say:

"Norman! Why didn't you tell me my guests were waiting?" I never said a word, but there was usually a conspiratorial impish smile for my comfort under the mild reprimand.

After luncheon Mr. Churchill liked to take his stroll round the grounds, feed the fish, throw a ball for Rufus and perhaps have a chat with some of the staff and tenants.

Then he returned to his bedroom, undressed and would sleep like a child for two hours.

The origin of the afternoon rest goes back a long time. In 1895, when he joined the army as a Lieutenant in the 4th Queen's Own Hussars he persuaded a fellow officer, Lieutenant Burnes, to apply for permission during their leave to go to Cuba where rebellion had broken out.

He saw some sporadic fighting while serving as a volunteer with the Spanish forces, and also had perforce to follow the universal custom of holding up the war during the heat of the day and retiring to bed for an hour or so.

Mr. Churchill was then twenty-one, and the idea did not greatly appeal to him, but years later, when enormous

pressure of work at the Admiralty during the First World War taxed even his vigour, he started to sleep every afternoon. As everyone knows, it was an even more inflexible rule after 1940. The effect of this complete break is really to make two working days out of one—and he literally does twice the amount of work of the average person and exerts himself for twice the length of the conventional eight-hour day.

It was during his Cuban adventure, incidentally, that he adopted the habit of smoking cigars.

It was one of the inflexible rules of Mr. Churchill's daily routine that he should not miss this rest. When later during my employment he became Prime Minister there was a bed provided for him in the Houses of Parliament, and, of course, he was always able to get his sleep in before the time came for an important debate or even for the routine daily question time, when those for the Prime Minister started at about No. 45.

Another example of his insistence on having his afternoon sleep in a proper bed was that on the occasions when a luncheon for the leaders of the Conservative Party was held at the Savoy Hotel—this normally took place once a week while Mr. Churchill was in Opposition—a bedroom was reserved for him to which he could retire immediately the lunch was over.

Even on his election tour train there had to be a bed—a big one. It was necessary to tear the side off the coach to get it in. It was after one of his afternoon naps that Mr. Churchill had his most embarrassing moment. We had been to Windsor and a room had been provided for Mr. Churchill's nap. He had just got up when Prince Charles was brought into the room to be introduced. Mr. Churchill shook hands gravely and chatted to the young Prince for a few minutes before he realised that he was

standing in his shirt and underpants. Red-faced officials ushered Prince Charles from the room.

At Chartwell, if there were no guests, and sometimes even if there were, he would work in bed until six o'clock.

He would then get up, bathe and dress in readiness for dinner which was usually at eight. As many a guest at a private dinner at Chartwell or Hyde Park Gate knows there was an important ritual at this event which was never omitted.

As soon as the guests were all seated, one of the maids would bring in a bowl of dog food with a small mat. The mat was laid at the side of my Guv'nor's chair, and the bowl handed to him. Then Rufus was called and his master handed him his meal.

Until the dog had finished, the human beings were not served.

About midnight Mr. Churchill would go upstairs—but not to sleep. Instead of entering his bedroom he would go to his adjoining study, and send for one of his secretaries. Then he would start dictating again for two hours or more.

The last thing he always did was to brush his hair. He insisted on brushing the few strands of hair he had straight down over his ears.

" That's the only way to keep your hair, Norman," he used to tell me.

Between two and four he would go to bed. I would put out the light and creep out.

But there would be one final request.

" Norman, you have forgotten my eye blinkers."

Mr. Churchill always wanted these black pads handy so that he could slip them on if the morning light woke him up.

So an eighteen to twenty-hour day came to an end.

Chartwell Manor

As a personal servant to Mr. Churchill I had, of course, to live close to his home, and as soon as my engagement was confirmed after a month's trial, he allocated to me a delightful cottage to which I brought my wife.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Churchill took a personal interest in getting us settled, Mrs. Churchill discussing the usual womanly things about curtains and the arrangement of the furniture, or Mr. Churchill would drop in unexpectedly during one of his afternoon strolls around the grounds, during which, even if he did not make any practical suggestions on domestic matters which were hardly a man's affair, he did not content himself with merely asking whether everything was to our satisfaction, but looked around with a keen eye to make certain that it was so.

None of the tenants of Chartwell ever needed to want for anything, and I am quite certain that if we had suggested we were short of an easy chair, he would have instantly told me to carry one out of his own house. His generosity in what might have been to him small things but would at the same time have caused some personal upset was a by-word among all the staff at his home.

The cottage I had allocated to me was very close to the house so that from my bedroom window I could see Mr. Churchill's and thus know by the drawn curtains whether he was still in bed, or whether, as sometimes happened, he got up unusually early, whereupon I would rush across.

Most of the cottages on the estate have to a greater or lesser extent been adapted by Mr. Churchill himself. As

in the case of everything he tackled, Mr. Churchill became a very skilled bricklayer, and he once told me, and I have no reason to doubt it, for I have never heard him boast but often detected in him an understatement, that he was perfectly capable when he was a younger man of laying a brick a minute.

Indeed, there was a long wall in the grounds as well as extensions and renovations to the cottages which occupied him five or more hours a day for many weeks about twenty-five years ago.

It was manual labour which, as some of the older members of the staff told me, caused a tremendous fuss back in 1928, when Mr. Hicks, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers, invited him to join the Union if he was doing this sort of work. Mr. Churchill was classified as an "adult apprentice" and duly paid a membership fee of 5s.

Unemployment was quite severe at that time, of course, and political hostility as a result of the General Strike made trade unionists very touchy.

Mr. Churchill's acceptance as an apprentice member of the Union was a harmless gesture, and considering that at the time he was by no means a wealthy man, there was no question of any brickwork at Chartwell being carried out if he did not carry it out himself.

Eventually there was a tremendous outcry about it, with public resolutions by other unions insisting that Mr. Churchill had become a trade unionist for a joke, and was thus bringing the movement into disrepute.

Despite all the fuss and bother, he kept his trade union ticket and so far as I know, he could still, if he wanted, get a job as a bricklayer on a "closed shop" constructional job.

Chartwell was bought by Mr. Churchill from the money which he received for writing "The World Crisis," which

is said to have brought him in royalties in the first few months after publication of £20,000—a very insignificant figure compared with the reputed one and a half million dollars paid for the American serial rights of his history on the Second World War.

Soon after I went to live at Chartwell I began reading the first volume of these Memoirs, "The Gathering Storm," in an effort to gain some knowledge of the real personality of my new master.

I was particularly struck with a comment he wrote concerning the years 1931—1935 when, as he put it, he was living "from mouth to hand" by writing newspaper articles. He described his daily life.

"I lived mainly at Chartwell," he wrote, "where I had much to amuse me. I built with my own hands a large part of two cottages and extensive garden walls and made all kinds of rockeries and water-works and a large swimming pool which was filtered to limpidity and could be heated to supplement our fickle sunshine.

"Thus I never had a dull or idle moment from morning till midnight and with my happy family around, dwelt at peace within my habitation."

Really to appreciate the peace that is a part of Chartwell, one must live there. Considering its proximity to London and the fame of its owner, Chartwell Manor is surprisingly little known.

Even on a fine Sunday afternoon when my Guv'nor was in the news and it could be reasonably expected that there would be many comings and goings of Ministers, it was quite rare to see more than a handful of people clustered around the gates. Most of the time there were no more people around than near any other pleasant country house in England.

I am quite certain that in time to come Chartwell Manor will be one of the historic houses of England—

and not, as Mr. Churchill is supposed to have said in a black mood during the pre-war years, "I suppose these bricks will be excavated in five hundred years' time as a relic of Stanley Baldwin's England."

It may be of some interest to describe the place where I lived and worked for many memorable months up to the time that my Guv'nor again became Prime Minister, and then at every interval that he could manage to get away from London.

The house stands only three or four miles along the road which leads from Quebec Square in Westerham, so named in commemoration of General Wolfe, who was born there. The road climbs steadily upwards so that the house has an outlook right over the Weald of Kent as far as the South Downs, only the trees around Crowborough Beacon preventing a view of the sea.

The present house is reputedly built on the site of a Manor House of the reign of Edward III, tenanted from that time by the Attwell family. The name of the first tenants is possibly just a legend, for "chart" is actually a Kentish dialect word meaning common land. Nothing remains of that early house, which was pulled down early in the sixteenth century when a new one was constructed.

The second house was evidently quite an important Tudor residence, for it is said that Henry VIII stayed there when he was riding to see his estranged wife, Anne Boleyn, living near the Kent coast.

The room on the first floor, which is now the dining room, is said to be the bedroom which Henry VIII used.

When Mr. Churchill bought the house in 1922 it had been the property of the Colquhoun family for many generations. It then had some eighty acres of gardens, woods and fields which all sloped towards a series of lakes fed from small streams in the surrounding hills.

After the last war Mr. Churchill added to his property,

so that with the adjoining farm he now has some five hundred acres.

The group of cottages which lie to the south of the lakes are some three hundred years old, and there is a bit of a mystery about them, because the weather vane on the centre takes the design of the double eagle of the Austrian monarchy, and no one knows the reason why this should appear on some farm cottages in the middle of the Kent countryside.

A charming feature at the corner of the woodland is an ornate shelter called the Marlborough Pavilion, which is decorated with a frieze painted by Major John Churchill, Mr. Churchill's nephew. On it is a portrayal of the Battle of Blenheim at which the family's illustrious hero, the Duke of Marlborough, was, of course, the victor.

Inside this rather formal building are the busts of the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough and also of Queen Anne and Prince Eugene of Savoy.

A very old vine, now past the age for bearing quality grapes, forms a covered way between the pavilion and the walled rose garden.

On one side of the wall is a door, and leading from that a paved path to the fish ponds, a route which my Guv'nor took every day that he was residing at Chartwell.

The house itself is not very large, and the fact that on one side trees cluster close to it, while the side itself is on a considerable slope, makes it look smaller than it really is.

Even so, the original Tudor house must have been smaller still, and judging from the brickwork of the sixteenth century which can still be clearly seen, it could have been only one room thick.

The front door, which at a distance looks as if it is decorated with most beautiful carved stone is, in fact, made from pinewood and was built to the orders and design of my Guv'nor.

On going through the front door, there is a spacious hall: to the right of this is Lady Churchill's bedroom and to the left the library. Beyond the library, along a short passage, there is on one side the general office overlooking the front drive-way, and opposite it a small room for Lady Churchill's secretary.

Going back towards the hall on one's left is the door to the studio, a magnificent high beamed room which I was told had in days gone by been the refectory at which the servants and farm workers sat down to their communal meal, and on such occasions as the harvest supper and Christmas dinner, there they met their master and his wife in convivial company.

Upstairs on the first floor—there is, I should mention, a sort of semi-basement which in fact becomes the ground floor because of the sloping ground for part of this area below the rooms which I have just described—we come to the hall, library and the dining room. This is a very splendid room which reaches to the roof of huge oak beams and rafters. At one end of this there used to be a minstrels' gallery, but this has been walled off to make my Guv'nor's study. This room is, of course, made attractive by the high ceiling and oak beams just as in the dining room.

Sir Winston's bedroom which comes at the corner of the house immediately over Lady Churchill's, is really part of this study.

Across the passage from the bedroom and study is the staircase, and next to it the "usual offices," and a pantry.

The drawing room occupies the wing extending at right angles over the studio, and is a large and comfortable room capable of accommodating a large party of guests.

Lastly, at the other end, are two guest bedrooms next to the dining room, and across the passage another small room which is used by the servants for storage, mending linen and so on.

A third floor comes above this in which are the staff bedrooms.

Family Life

In innumerable photographs which mark great occasions of twentieth century history Sir Winston Churchill is seen with Lady Churchill. Smiling, attractive, always just a little in the background, her eyes are invariably on her husband.

Her watchfulness over her famous husband's health, her pride in his achievements, and her unremitting devotion are a byword. Brilliant as Sir Winston is, he would, I think, be the first to admit that his supremely happy marriage made his career possible—and worth while.

Mr. Churchill was thirty-four when he married his lovely 22-year-old bride. It was obviously a case of love at first sight, for they met for the first time only a few months before. It was during the 1908 election contest at Dundee.

Clementine Hozier was interested in politics—a meeting point for the couple—but it is not difficult to believe that it was her beauty that instantly attracted Mr. Churchill.

Everyone, I think, servant, friend, relative or colleague, must be conscious in their presence that theirs is one of those rare perfect partnerships. After forty years they seemed to me to be utterly dependent on one another—perhaps my Guv'nor more than "Clemmie" as everyone, high and low, called her.

I have not the literary skill to portray the understanding which existed between them. Sometimes I felt that it could be described as that between a mother and small

child, sometimes the almost telepathic understanding which one finds very occasionally between brother and sister. It was certainly more than the usual accepted companionship of a long married couple.

Sir Winston's unswerving loyalty to anyone and anything is, of course, proverbial. In his marriage this can be seen at its zenith, but that does not explain the unquestioning regard he has for his wife.

His speeches must first be tried out in her presence. Decisions about holidays must be discussed with her. Any crisis, domestic, national or personal, demands her presence. She is always at hand.

I saw Mr. Churchill jolted out of his normal morning routine on two occasions. One was in the desolation he felt on the early morning announcement of the death of King George VI. The other was his mystified horror that he could be charged as a warmonger as he was on the eve of the 1951 election. On both occasions he stumbled out of bed and rushed to "Clemmie," calling for her as he went.

What she said to bring a semblance of peace into my Guv'nor's worried mind at such times is, of course, their secret. But one may be certain that she combined wisdom as well as affection, for neither by itself would have been sufficient for a man of the calibre of Sir Winston.

Maybe it was this unique gift that made my master adore her from the beginning. It is difficult for my generation to realise that many people regarded Miss Clementine Hozier as making a most unfortunate match.

The stiff-necked society of the day regarded the tempestuous young Mr. Churchill as "an outsider."

No house of the great Conservative families, and that meant virtually all of them, would receive the young married couple, with the exception of his family seat at Blenheim.

At public functions people looked the other way, and gossiping dowagers were not averse to talking about "that wicked young man" loudly enough for the young couple to overhear; and one exalted duke announced publicly that if he had his way he would put Mr. Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George "in the midst of twenty couple of foxhounds."

The early years of their married life were, therefore, very much of a case of "we two against the world," and the closeness has prevailed whatever the attitude of the world in later years.

In failure and triumph, during crisis and serenity, Lady Churchill has remained constructively helpful and comforting.

"Mrs. Churchill seemed to be the only person who remained calm, collected and efficient," wrote Lord Beaverbrook in "Politicians and the War," in his account of the Churchill household in 1915 when Mr. Churchill, with the rank of Major, prepared to leave for the Western Front.

In these later years their love has kept them wonderfully youthful. I hope that I am not speaking out of turn when I say that in her sixties, as Lady Churchill was when I saw her daily, she had the physical appearance of a woman twenty-five years younger. She had the lithe figure and limbs of a young woman. Her hair is naturally wavy and she takes great care of it, shampooing it herself very frequently.

She is very conscious that hair can be "Woman's crowning glory." Many a housemaid has been advised by her about the hair style which would enhance her attractiveness.

Although she was always a good friend to the staff she would permit no slackness. The household had to run like a machine—no mean feat with the unique routine

of an eighteen hour day and meals which had to be served to perfection even though they had been put back for an hour or so.

She never left things to the cook or senior maids. Every menu was drawn up by her, and she personally saw to all repairs and decorating. Details like feeling if plates were warm before they were placed in front of her husband and guests were never overlooked.

It was the same with the workers' cottages on the Chartwell estate. As soon as she arrived from London she would pay a friendly call on one or two families.

All the numerous children adored her—and she knew everyone of them by their Christian names.

She was in her glory when one of the wives of the tenants was planning some re-decoration or re-furnishing. She would chat about colour schemes, cost, and the wearing qualities of materials as one housewife to another.

Mr. Churchill's devotion to his wife was an inspiration to me and everyone who came in personal contact with him.

I have known him select a rosebud on a bush in the gardens at Chartwell, watch it day after day, protect it from rain and insects—just so that it became a perfect bloom to present to his wife.

And when they were apart, as for example when we went to America at the turn of the year 1951-52, he would put in a telephone call from the ship or from New York simply to say "hello!"

Lady Churchill is the perfect housewife and perfect hostess. As soon as she was at Chartwell there were invitations to guests. In the afternoon they might be her grandchildren at a tea party; in the evening some political colleagues of her husband.

No one made duty visits to the Churchill household. They came because they had a wonderful time.

FAMILY LIFE

I suppose my Guv'nor's affection for animals accounted for the rather odd nicknames the family used in the intimacy of their home. I have often seen Mr. Churchill lean across the dining-table, affectionately squeeze Mrs. Churchill's hand and purr: "Dear Cat!"

She made her rather odd reply: "Dear Pig" sound like an affectionate caress.

The Guv'nor often called his daughter Mary, "Mary The Chimp" and he dubbed Sarah "Sarah The Mule."

It was a family joke to call to each other with affectionate noises which only they understood and recognised.

Often when Mrs. Churchill arrived at Chartwell from a visit to London she would stand in the front hall shouting, "Wow! Wow!"

She would wait for a few seconds. Then Mr. Churchill would bellow back "Wow! Wow!"

It was a strange custom, but we all got used to it.

My Guv'nor was, of course, profoundly proud and fond of his family. He was always extremely careful not to show favouritism in any way, but in my mind, he loved most of all his daughter Mary, married to Mr. Christopher Soames.

Mrs. Soames is an extremely beautiful woman, and there was obviously a unique understanding between father and daughter. This may have been partly due to the fact that they were so constantly in one another's company, Mr. and Mrs. Soames living at the farmhouse on the Chartwell Estate. There were not many days that passed without Mary looking in to the studio or bedroom to greet "Papa" as she called him. The Soames children were always running about the house, coming in to kiss Grandpa on the cheek.

Diana, married to Mr. Duncan Sandys, was not at the house quite so often, her husband's political life keeping her, of course, extremely busy.

My Guv'nor was extremely proud of his talented daughter, Sarah, who is, of course, well known as an actress.

People were always asking Miss Sarah Churchill whether she found that having such a famous name was in reality a handicap in her career, because people might tend to think of her, not as an actress in her own right, but as Winston Churchill's daughter.

The story goes that at the outset of her career she asked her father whether it would be better to change her name, not only for her own sake, but because having an actress in the family might not be the most desirable thing for her father.

He laughed away the very idea that she should even consider such a thing and added: "Don't forget, my dear, that worthwhile people are always able to overcome disadvantages."

Miss Sarah was given complete freedom to follow her desire to be an actress, indeed her father was in a way responsible. She was seventeen when he considered that her fervour for hockey and lacrosse needed to be feminized, and Mr. Churchill persuaded her to take lessons in dancing and deportment.

She enjoyed the classes so much that she determined to become an actress. C. B. Cochran gave her a job as a chorus girl in "Follow the Sun" and by the time war broke out, when she was twenty-five, she was one of London's theatrical stars.

A true Churchill, she abandoned her career and joined the W.A.A.F.

When I first saw her she was a very happy person for life was perfect for her. She had fallen in love with Mr. Anthony Beauchamp and they had recently been married. Her father had a great liking for his new son-in-law and they used to discuss photography and painting as one artist to another for hours.

Miss Sarah was also on the crest of the wave of success. She had given a cookery demonstration on the newly opened B.B.C. TV service which somehow made a terrific hit, not so much because it was full of useful advice but on account of its entertainment.

When the Rank film organisation sent her to the U.S.A. to make a series of personal appearances to publicise British films, there were television offers, as well as theatrical and film contracts.

My Guv'nor followed her career with close interest. He wanted to assure himself, I think, that his daughter was not being exploited in America as a nine-day wonder because of her famous name.

He was soon satisfied. Miss Sarah became known as " the girl with a million friends " through her fame as resident hostess-interviewer in a programme called " The Hallmark Hall of Fame," which dealt with the lives of famous people, living and dead.

My Guv'nor's son was, in my opinion, his greatest friend.

I believe that he felt a very great pride in Mr. Randolph Churchill's career, and certainly there was no one that I have ever met who venerated my Guv'nor so completely as Mr. Randolph did.

It is indeed fair to say, as it possibly cannot often be done in the case of a father and middle-aged son, that the two men were passionately fond of one another. They are remarkably alike, not only in physical appearance as everyone must know, but in character and temperament.

This inevitably meant that there would sometimes be clashes of opinion, and there were, indeed, on occasions, heated arguments, when both lost their tempers, more so because each could easily be hurt by the other.

The relationship would not have been the intimate thing

it was, if there had not been the differences of views when robust Anglo-Saxon words were hurled one to the other.

Mr. Randolph Churchill is not, as many an editor and political opponent knows, a "yes man."

He was not so in conversation with his father. This frankly was an unusual situation for my Guv'nor.

It is possibly one of the disadvantages of Sir Winston's greatness that everyone, even members of the family and distinguished men whose political position was as high in their own countries as my Guv'nor's in Britain, would tend to defer to the Churchillian opinion.

His son out of all the hundreds of people who came to Chartwell and the other residences, would never diverge by a single inch from his own line simply because he was in the presence of an older and more distinguished man.

I know from some of the comments that my Guv'nor used to make to me after he had talked to his son, that this attitude was regarded as the greatest compliment that could be paid to him.

It was incidentally a reason why Mr. Churchill had considerable regard for some of his Socialist opponents. Those who made cheap jibes simply for notoriety, or possibly on the grounds of personal jealousy, created nothing but contempt in his mind, but others who argued the points with him from their hearts he treated with respect and regarded with something close to affection as adversaries worthy of his attention.

One token of the importance he attached to his children's love for him was the gold fountain pen that they all contributed to give him for a birthday present. This pen had to go with us wherever we went, and while normally my Guv'nor used an ordinary ball-pointed pen for most of his work, if there was an important or memorable docu-

ment to sign, then he would always say to me: "Norman, bring out my gold pen."

Sir Winston has the natural understanding of young children which seems to be the gift of the really great. Tiny children on the estate were never afraid of him, and they took liberties which must have appalled some of the important personages strolling with my Guv'nor round the estate.

There was something about his cherubic face that they liked.

"All babies are like me," he once said when a visitor remarked on the likeness of one of his grandchildren to him. It is remarkably true. His face, even in his seventies, had the honesty and simplicity of a child's.

Much of the scene in the grounds of Chartwell was proof of his affection for his children in their young days. The swimming pool was built for them, and the waterfalls and pools fed by the lake were built by my Guv'nor when his children were small so that all of them could have a glorious time floundering in mud and water as dams were built and new rivulets created.

Older workers on the estate remember the tree-top house he built years before, risking his limbs and straining his shoulder, which never quite recovered from the original injury of his youth, to carry up the timber and tools.

He gloried then, as later with his grandchildren, in always being approachable—a friend as well as a parent or grandparent.

This was Sir Winston's determination that his children should not yearn for fatherly affection as he had. He has recalled how Lord Randolph, the father whom he idolized, had only three or four intimate conversations with his son in the twenty years before he died. And there is indication

of the depths of feeling stirred up in his comment to his son as the latter returned to Eton after the holidays.

"I have talked to you more this holiday than my father talked to me in his whole life."

The love he bestowed on his family has been returned a thousand-fold. Here, more than in fame and fortune, lies the reason why Sir Winston Churchill is a happy man.

His Personal Possessions

I SUPPOSE Sir Winston Churchill is today a very wealthy man. On the royalties from his books alone he must rank among the highest-paid writers of the century—or indeed of any century.

If so, no one would know it. The food, the furnishings and so on of his household are those of a civilised, comfortably-off family—but certainly they do not typify the lavish luxury of the home of a wealthy man.

Unlike so many people able to indulge their tastes or make investments comparable with their prestige, *objets d'art,* old masters, jewellery and so on were not features of the Churchill residences. Neither my Guv'nor nor his wife had the collector's mania.

The symbolism of a possession meant far more to my Guv'nor than the intrinsic worth. Thus charming but really valueless tokens of regard sent by children at a school, a Cockney grandmother bombed out of her East End tenement, or a relic of a war-time occasion would be treasured just as much as some of the beautiful caskets and insignia presented to him by civic dignitaries and learned bodies.

Gifts of this nature are, of course, innumerable and of infinite variety over the years. From all sorts of organisations, towns, and industries in the European countries occupied during the war and from the U.S.A. and the Commonwealth came beautiful articles symbolising the interests of the donors. One day they will possibly form exhibits in a fascinating museum which could make that

devoted to the Duke of Wellington in Piccadilly pale into insignificance.

All were cared for with affection and gratitude, but comparatively few of the usable gifts were in fact used.

There were, for example, many wrist watches, some given by Swiss cantons and towns world famous for their craft. But Mr. Churchill continued to wear his pocket watch with its heavy chain.

He liked, I think, the gifts which had been chosen because they were so eminently suitable and reflected some facet of his personality. There was, for example, a lovely silver cigar box made by the finest craftsmen in Denmark which he received in October 1950. This he found as useful as it was a lovely ornament.

The four black swans from Australia delighted him. Some of them came in September 1952, and he was constantly visiting the lake at Chartwell to satisfy himself that they were all right. When foxes killed some of the cygnets he was very distraught, and the London Zoo were asked to give expert advice.

People who presented living things could be assured that the famous recipient's interest would be constant and personal. When Mr. Thomson gave him a lion in the early days of the War many unimaginative people must have thought it a rather silly and flamboyant gesture.

But it was one which my Guv'nor appreciated. The British lion is more than a lifeless emblem to him. He was always delighted when he heard, during the eight years or so that the animal thrived, that Rota had sired another litter of cubs, which occurred with great regularity.

Perhaps Sir Winston's love of animals encouraged his dislike of the motor car—because it is the victorious enemy over the horse.

He used sometimes to go out of his way to criticise motors. For instance, when he made his speech at the

Royal College of Physicians in July 1951, in honour of Lord Moran, he praised medical science and then paused to consider the pros and cons of progress.

"It is arguable," he said, "whether the human race have been gainers by the march of science beyond the steam engine. Electricity opens a field of infinite conveniences to ever greater numbers, but they may well have to pay dearly for them. But anyhow in my thoughts I stop short of the internal combustion engine which has made the world so much smaller."

And in the House of Commons a year later he said:

"I have always considered that the substitution of the internal combustion engine for the horse marked a very gloomy milestone in the progress of mankind."

Consequently it is not surprising to know that cars were not among my Guv'nor's possessions. Of course, he constantly used cars, and quixotically, in view of the manner in which he despised them, demanded the maximum benefits that the internal combustion engine could provide.

When motoring Mr. Churchill liked to travel fast. Invariably he was a little later than he said he would be for his journeys. This was, as a matter of fact, a quirk of his character as he was always well aware of the time, and not a lack of orderliness in his habits, and I think he got some amiusement by noting how worried everybody was getting.

The driver provided by the car hire firm was always the same man, and very skilful he was. We rarely had more than fifty minutes to do the journey from Chartwell to Whitehall, and, in the rural sections of the trip, before we got to the congested London suburbs, it was not unusual for us to cover twenty miles in twenty-two minutes.

I cannot recall any narrow shaves that we had with this superb driver, except on one occasion when we were travelling along the by-pass to the North of Oxford, which connects the London road with that for Banbury and the

Midlands, when a front tyre burst while we were going at 80 miles an hour.

I admit that I was extremely frightened, for the car rocked from side to side before the driver pulled up.

Mr. Churchill, however, never even took the cigar from his mouth.

When I say that the establishment at Chartwell could boast no car that was not quite true. There was one.

The "car" was an old battered Austin Ten. Its only real job was to take Mr. Churchill back to the house after his visit to the lake and farm.

Mrs. Churchill could not stand the sight of it, for it was really a most dilapidated veteran.

One day she decided to get rid of the wreck and buy a new car for the estate. The old Austin was taken to a local garage and sold for about £40. Mrs. Churchill bought a new Hillman Minx to replace it.

The next day when the Guv'nor had fed the fish I turned up in the new car to take him back to the house.

He glared at it in disbelief and consternation.

"What's that?" he asked.

I explained that it was his fine new car. His only answer was: "Well, I want the old one back."

We had to buy it back from the garage. The price was £80 because the garage owner had already sold it for that figure to someone else.

I myself bought a dilapidated twenty-year-old Morris Cowley while I was at Chartwell. One day it was standing near my cottage as I accompanied my Guv'nor on his afternoon stroll.

He eyed the rather depressing sight with some disfavour and considerable wonderment and asked whose it was.

I told him that it was mine.

"Does it go?" he enquired mildly.

Machinery, large and imposing in factories or fascinating

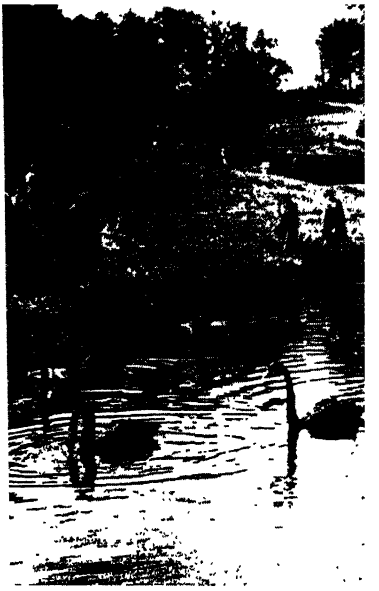
Rufus, the French poodle who is the inseparable companion of Sir Winston.

Norman McGowan with Rufus.

Why Tell? as a foal on the Chartwell farm greets the author.

Sir Winston greets Colonist II, by far his most successful horse.

Mickey, the Chartwell farm cat, who could make the Guv'nor's day.



Some of the famous black swans, a gift from Australia, on one of the lakes at Chartwell.

Sir Winston with Canyon Kid. This horse dropped dead with heart failure to the sorrow and consternation of his owner.

Grandfather for the eighth time. Sir Winston at the christening of Jeremy Soames in August, 1952. Also in this family group is the baby's godfather, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery.

Two Winston Churchills. The Guv'nor with his grandson, the son of Randolph Churchill.

Randolph Churchill greeting his father at a ceremony of the Cinque Ports.

Anthony Eden with his wife Clarissa.

With another of his grandsons —Nicholas Soames.

and ingenious household gadgets, made no appeal to him. It was too mundane and unromantic.

Yet I think that he liked the sense of power it could give—which is why high speeds on our journeys pleased him.

He also liked to hear the rumble of a bulldozer and watch it wrestle with natural obstacles.

One day he looked from his study window at Chartwell, he said:

" Norman, I think that little hill would look better over there," sweeping his arm from one side to the other.

It was all part of his delight in what he called " changing the scenery." A few days later a bulldozer arrived and the hill was gradually shifted. He watched it at work with tremendous satisfaction as the trees crashed and vast mounds of earth were shifted.

Returning to the subject of gifts from admirers, one which greatly pleased him came from a group of Japanese amateur artists for Christmas 1951. It consisted of a box of oil paints and a translation into Japanese of his book " Painting as a Pastime."

There was also a remarkable gift from the United States which combined appeal through beauty, value, and sentiment. Moreover it was a book, and thus an object certainly bound to be treated with love and care.

It came from a business man in Massachussets who had heard Mr. Churchill's historic speech over the BBC, and relayed throughout the world, on the death of King George VI, and put it into a book.

The tiny volume measured only $2\frac{1}{4}$ ins. x $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins. and had been printed from hand-set type. It was beautifully bound and tooled in morocco leather. Only 750 copies were published.

There was, incidentally, a special record of this famous broadcast (as indeed of all the historic ones) because by

public demand the BBC's library recording was mass produced and sold to the public. By my Guv'nor's order all profits went toward the construction of old peoples' homes for the Church Army.

The gold cigar case which my Guv'nor used was in itself a lovely and valuable object, but his regard for it was because it had belonged to Lord Birkenhead and had been presented to him as a memento by the family after his death.

For the same reason he treasured a black Buddha, once the property of Sir Ian Hamilton, a close friend from the days of Gallipoli until Sir Ian's death in 1947.

Pictures adorned the walls of his study and bedroom for the same reason—their sentimental value: the Duke of Marlborough, his admired and venerated ancestor, a cartoon of Lord Randolph Churchill, his father, and a fading portrait of Mrs. Everest, his nurse whom he adored and on whose death when he was twenty he wept unashamedly.

"My nurse was my confidante . . . my dearest and most intimate friend during the whole of the twenty years I had lived. Death came very easily to her. She had lived such an innocent and loving life of service to others, and held such a simple faith, that she had no fears and did not seem to mind very much.

He wrote that about her in *My Early Life,* his famous autobiography.

The epitaph does not mention that in her last illness, when she was living in retirement not far from Camden Town, Mr. Churchill was at Sandhurst. Day after day he made the journey to London, sitting with his old nurse for hours and then rushing back in the early dawn to be in time for parade. His devotion enabled him to be present when she died.

It need hardly be said that Sir Winston's most treasured

possessions are his books—such as the beautifully bound works of Lord Macaulay which were in the library at Hyde Park Gate.

Sir Winston has a deep affection for books as things of worth and beauty quite distinct from what he might feel about their contents. He once wrote:

" If you cannot read all your books, at any rate handle, or as it were, fondle them—peer into them, let them fall open where they will, read from the first sentence that arrests the eye, set them back on their shelves with your own hands, arrange them on your own plan so that if you do not know what is in them, you at least know where they are. Let them be your friends; let them at any rate be your acquaintances."

He certainly practised what he preached, and I have never seen him use a book with disrespect even in his occasional outbursts of temper or impatience. That is to say that no one would ever dare to use a book to prop open a door or as a stand for anything. Sometimes for an hour or more long after midnight when I myself was tired and impatient to get to bed, I would hurry around while he took down one book after another, glanced at it, caressed it with his hands, thought for a moment or two about the contents and then moved on to another. As he said in his advice, he regarded books as something to fondle.

In Relaxation

It may be thought that Sir Winston has such a sense of duty and personal destiny that his life is carefully scheduled to use every moment usefully.

The conception is forgivable when the activities of a man in the evening of life are noted with admiration and amazement. But in reality he knows how to relax just as he knows how to work. Both are achieved to an enviable peak of perfection.

His afternoon walk around the estate at Chartwell was, I suppose, purposeless and pointless—except for the all-important factors of digesting his luncheon, getting some gentle exercise and seeing people and things which stimulated him.

When he stopped for five minutes to entice a robin to feed from his hand they were not wasted minutes. The robin's friendliness—only shown towards my Guv'nor, by the way—was part of the vast world which so enthralled him.

Mr. Churchill had very simple and down to earth tastes in relaxation. Without any doubt he loved his home so much that going to theatres and so on became something of a duty, unless, of course, the theme made a particular appeal to him, probably on account of a story glorifying the English character or of some great personality in the history of the country.

There was a television set in the corner of Mr. Churchill's studio, but, so far as I know, he never looked at it. The same can be said for sound radio, which did not appeal to him. He might sometimes switch on a set when there was

a likelihood of important news about some foreign country or personality and briefly turn on the evening news bulletin of the BBC.

As regards news of British economic or political developments he was, of course, informed far more quickly than the BBC bulletins could possibly tell him.

He did not care for listening in as a form of recreation in the evening, least of all as a musical background.

Sometimes he would decide to play records and his favourites were the music from the operas by Gilbert and Sullivan. There was also a well-worn record which had been specially prepared for him, which contained his favourite war-time songs "Ta-ra-ra-boom-deay" from the First World War, "We'll Hang out our Washing on the Siegfried Line" and "Run, Rabbit, Run" from the Second World War.

Music did, I think, jar and interrupt his train of thought. That may be the reason why he would never allow anyone to whistle near him—not even his favourite "Run, Rabbit, Run."

One tune he would never listen to was "Keep Right on to the End of the Road," because it made him so sad.

The exception to his lack of interest in music was his delight in taking part in the sing-song at Harrow School. He knew all the school's traditional songs well.

During the War he told the boys of the school: "You have the songs of Bowen and Howson, whom I remember well as housemasters here, with the music of John Farmer and Eaton Faning. They are wonderful, marvellous, more than could be put into bricks and mortar or treasured in trophies of silver or gold. They grow with the years. I treasure them and sing them with joy."

It is not difficult to appreciate that it was what the words of songs stood for rather than the merit of the music which really appealed to him.

Harrow's evening with the school staff and pupils was a great and eagerly awaited event with him. He used to join in vigorously and whole-heartedly, although I will not say that his tones enhanced the melodies!

I did once see him glance at the television set. I was in his studio where I had gone to clean his paint brushes and I switched on the set because the 1950 Boat Race was being transmitted. My Guv'nor came in and watched beside me for a short time.

" Many a fine healthy young man has strained his heart doing that," he said, and then he moved away.

I think he had much sympathy with the man who said " the only exercise I get is acting as pall bearer to men who took exercise." Purposeless arm waving and body-bending had no place in his life.

Mrs. Churchill was occasionally worried in winter time that he was not getting enough exercise and as a broad hint she had some physical movements typed out under the heading " exercises."

One of the wives on the estate had the previous evening been describing to my wife the pre-natal exercises the doctor had advised her to follow to help with the birth of her expected baby.

The exercises for my Guv'nor seemed much the same and I made the notice read " Pre-natal Exercises."

We had an efficacious system with notes we wanted read of sticking them on the mirror of the Guv'nor's dressing table.

I saw him study the exercises while he was tying his bow tie. Then he called me over and mildly enquired.

" Norman, do I look pregnant?"

The exercises were, I need hardly add, ignored.

Outside his home environment, my Guv'nor's great interest was in the weekly gatherings of " The Other Club," an organisation which seems to have escaped the atten-

tion of the gossip writers in the Press, although there was nothing secretive about it.

When Mr. Churchill was still in Opposition these weekly meetings usually took the form of a luncheon at the Savoy Hotel, and the management provided a bedroom for my Guv'nor's siesta afterwards.

"The Other Club" is very dear to his heart, for it is a link with his early days as a politician. He formed it in co-operation with his great friend F. E. Smith (later Lord Birkenhead) in 1907, when he was "in the political wilderness" after resigning from the Tory Party and when Mr. Smith was roundly but vainly castigated by his colleagues for maintaining his friendship with "that young renegade Churchill."

The Club has maintained its tradition of providing a meeting place for political opponents to meet and talk as friends.

Many a back bencher who has deemed it politic to regard M.P.s on the other side as beyond the pale, to be cut dead in the smoking room and the corridors of the House would have been surprised at the identity of Mr. Churchill's guests at "The Other Club" luncheon.

Sir Winston Churchill has no malice in his character. He is totally incapable of rancour.

It was rare for my Guv'nor to go to a theatre, but he had a great delight in films of a spectacular kind, and particularly those which were of some facet of history, the kind of picture which is called a costume film.

He also liked comedies, and it is said that in the darkest days of the war he used to see Marx Brothers comedies as a relief from the burden of his office.

Every Sunday evening there was a cinema show at Chartwell to which Mr. Churchill invited the guests who might be staying in the house, and some of the staff of the household and the farms.

It was impossible to get all the staff in every Sunday, so that the general arrangement was that every man, his wife and their children, if they were old enough, could come on alternate Sundays.

These shows were very pleasant occasions indeed. We would assemble in the studio about 9 o'clock, and a few minutes later Mr. Churchill, with members of his family, and possibly a few guests, would enter.

Both my Guv'nor and his wife always stopped to chat with a farm labourer, a gardener, or a maidservant and her boy friend, as they made their way to their seats.

I think the most delightful scene that I recall at this time—and one which surely any press photographer would have given his pension to get—was Mr. Churchill talking to Ted Miles and his wife.

Ted was a remarkable character who worked on a rather vague basis on the farm, and was useful because of his uncanny way with animals, and his knowledge of the method of combating wild animals and vermin of all kinds.

Incidentally, he kept a fox as a pet, a feat which I think my Guv'nor rather envied. Mrs. Miles was a striking woman with dark hair and flashing eyes indicating, I think, that she had gypsy blood in her veins.

Although Mrs. Miles was quite young, she had borne her husband ten children, and in order to provide them with a comfortable home, my Guv'nor had knocked two cottages into one for them.

Mrs. Miles was the type of woman who was equally at home and natural with kings and commoners, and although I know she adored Mr. and Mrs. Churchill and would, like her husband, have laid down her life for them, she never showed any particular deference to either.

The result was that on Sunday evening while we all waited for the film to start, we would watch my Guv'nor in his blue siren suit or evening dress, for the rather for-

mal Sunday evening dinner, a cigar burning between his chubby fingers, talking animatedly with Mrs. Miles who was rarely seen without a rather dilapidated gasper drooping from her mouth.

I often used to contrast the frank and honest manner in which the Miles couple used to talk to my Guv'nor with the unctuous servility with which some very important people used to approach him.

And I know whom he respected the more . . . .

The films which we saw at Chartwell on those Sunday evenings were a special privilege, because the film companies, knowing the Guv'nor's pleasure in pictures, would send down advance copies often before their West End release.

This was a gesture of their esteem, and although the film industry is often accused of bad taste in its avid desire for publicity, never once was any use made of the fact that Mr. Churchill had seen and liked the films.

I think that it was as a result of my Guv'nor's pleasure in films that he became extremely friendly with Sir Alexander Korda, a frequent visitor to Chartwell. My Guv'nor admired him because Korda had made British films great, and in such pictures as "Lady Hamilton" and "The Lion has Wings" had helped to enhance the prestige both of the Britsh film industry and the country's history.

Another man who provided the simple pleasures which my Guv'nor liked so much was Harry Green, who occasionally came down as his guest, and was duly persuaded to perform some of his card tricks with that delightful Jewish patter of his.

For solitary entertainment, my Guv'nor used to read the books by C. S. Forester. The stories of Hornblower were always somewhere around his bedroom, and as a matter of fact, it was my Guv'nor's boyish delight in them which he expressed to me, that introduced me to

these wonderful adventures. I believe that the first Hornblower book was given to him by Mr. Oliver Lyttleton in the early part of the War as a means of relaxation.

Mr. Churchill was so intrigued with it that he bought every Hornblower story as it came out.

Most of them he must have read at least half a dozen times, but I have seen him turning over the pages of one of them as avidly as if it was the first time.

Rather rarely Mr. Churchill played cards with his guests in the evening. Canasta for a time fascinated him. The card table always had to be covered with a piece of velvet kept solely for this purpose. But neither the intricacies of intellectually-taxing games like bridge nor the games of chance really interested him. He was, indeed, amazed that anyone could prefer to while away the hours with cards when there were so many interesting and worth-while activities awaiting attention.

The Artist

"NORMAN, I want to show you how to look after my paints and brushes. It will be an important part of your duties."

It was the second day of my employment at Chartwell and I was with the Guv'nor in the studio. Nothing before this moment—or, indeed, afterwards—was dubbed "important." He would be tolerant about my mistakes and omissions, expecting that I would pick up the routine of my work as we went along. But when painting was concerned there could not be risks to the pictures or the equipment because I was untrained.

This is a clue to the great regard Sir Winston has for his pastime. He was, I am quite certain, completely convinced that Fate had made him an artist, and in one way he half regretted that circumstance had prevented his adopting it as his sole profession.

Of course, this was no more than a sub-conscious thought. It is quite impossible to believe for a second that he would ever have been content to stand in a studio while all the momentous events during his life occurred without his participation.

It is one of those quixotic tricks of life that most people can excel at nothing, while a few could, given two separate existences, triumph in two.

I am no art critic—although we Lancashire folk pride ourselves that cultural interests in the arts are more than normally important—and I would not claim that my Guv'nor was right in his belief that he had outstanding

talent if many experts had not also said the same thing.

Just before I joined Mr. Churchill's staff he had invited Sir John Rothenstein of the Tate Gallery to view some of his paintings and criticise them as man to man, or rather critic to artist.

The Guv'nor was deeply appreciative of Sir John's verdict:

"Pictures of real merit which bear a direct and intimate relation to his outlook on life. In these pictures there comes bubbling irrepressibly up his sheer enjoyment of the simple beauties of nature."

I had to be meticulously careful to care for brushes and so on after they had been used—which was almost every day while we were at Chartwell.

Usually there was quite a lot of clearing up to do. The Guv'nor attacked his canvases with zest and fervour.

"Trying to paint a picture is like trying to fight a battle," he once wrote. . "It is, if anything, more exciting than fighting it successfully; but the principle is the same. It is the same kind of problem as unfolding a long, sustained, interlocked argument."

That is a perfect description of his attitude as he sat, or frequently stood, in front of a picture. He battled to get it as he wanted.

In painting, even if Sir Winston calls it his pastime, he feels he has a vocation and a job. He does not really regard himself as an amateur, as shown when some amateur society wanted him to help their exhibition by loaning a canvas.

"I am a professional artist," he replied, excusing himself from contributing.

If professionalism means some income from the work involved then this is, of course, the fact. Christmas cards made from his paintings, notably "Chartwell under Snow" painted in 1947, sell in enormous quantities, par-

ticularly in the U.S.A., and when collections of his paintings are exhibited they draw vast crowds.

Many people believe that painting became Sir Winston's hobby as "an old man's recreation." This is not so. He owes his interest in it to his wife and his skill to a natural aptitude combined with years and years of practice.

Back in 1915, unhappy and in despair when he was out of office, he found some solace from his worries by playing with his two young children, Diana, then six, and Randolph, four. He used a child's box of paints to make brightly coloured pictures for the children's amusement. He was pleased with the result and soon afterwards bought himself an adult's set of oil paints, brushes and so on.

One of his friends was Sir John Lavery, who had been commissioned to paint Mr. Churchill's portrait. Sir John and Lady Lavery were sometimes guests at the Churchill home, and it was they who encouraged him to paint seriously.

"When I get to heaven I mean to spend a considerable proportion of my first million years in painting, and so get to the bottom of the subject," he wrote in a newspaper article (subsequently re-published in a collection of essays "Thoughts and Adventures"), and I am quite certain that this was a perfectly serious remark.

The hours with a brush and palette in his hands were akin to paradise to him in my time as his valet.

But always, of course, there has been far too little time for him to indulge in his pastime.

After that preliminary interest in 1915 war duties quickly called him back to office and the oils and canvas had to be put away.

Not until the war was over did he have time to take them out again and study the technique of painting seri-

ously. Walter Sickert, Augustus John, and Sir William Orpen were among the famous painters he met socially and promptly asked for advice and criticism.

Mr. Churchill at that time was not so prominent that these men, even if one accepts the unlikely theory that they might have spoiled their artistic probity with some gentle flattery, would have praised his talent with such words as "most promising," "extraordinary talent," as in fact they did.

Strangely perhaps, Mr. Churchill was uncharacteristically modest and diffident about his painting at that time.

Somewhere in France are four pictures now worth a considerable sum of money. They are landscapes and each is signed "Charles Morin." They are in reality the works of Winston Churchill executed in 1920 and 1921 and sold at a Parisian art gallery for about £25 each.

In 1922 after some tuition from William Nicholson and Harold Sickert he adopted the style of bright colours and vivid contrasts between light and shade for which he is now so famous. It happened when he went with Mrs. Churchill to the South of France to recuperate from the after-effects of his appendicitis operation, which was still bothering him. The blue waters of the Mediterannean, the red rocks of the Maures mountains, the gaily coloured sails of the boats in Cannes harbour, and the blinding light which accentuated these colours and produced heavy contrasts in the shadows stimulated him to paint as the dull, weak colours of England had never done.

One of the paintings of this period, "Cannes Harbour, Evening," is regarded as among his best works by art critics. It has been exhibited at the Royal Academy.

Up to the time I left Mr. Churchill's employment he had been "hung" at the Academy twenty-four times,

and he was tremendously proud of the title bestowed in 1948 of Hon. Academician Extraordinary.

I do not know how many paintings Sir Winston has executed in the forty years he has been at work for varying periods almost every year. I doubt whether he has any idea himself. They can be counted in hundreds, I imagine, for he is a quick worker and there are usually several in various stages of completion.

They lean one against the other around the studio walls. I soon gave up trying to get them in any order, partly because the seeming untidiness was in fact an orderly array in my Guv'nor's mind. He would go straight to a cluster of four or five and withdraw a half-completed canvas which he had that afternoon decided to work on again.

On return from holiday in Italy, North Africa, or the French Riviera I would unpack the half-finished canvases and put them ready for his attention. Some, of course, were completed, but there was no knowing when the Guv'nor would decide to make some changes. He had the true dissatisfaction of the real artist in that he always thought that a dab here and a dab there would improve it.

It need hardly be said that there was no rubbish about Muses or waiting for the right mood to work. If there was an hour to spare then painting would continue for that hour.

One of my jobs on holiday was to take a first-rate camera with me and photograph the scene Mr. Churchill was painting. He would also buy the high quality glossy photographs sold in France and Italy, as a reference of the buildings, trees and so on.

We also took colour pictures all around the scene he was painting so that on some dull, wintry day in England these could be projected and he could thus capture the general colour atmosphere.

Many of the pictures painted on holiday were little more than outlines with perhaps a section coloured until their completion weeks or months later in the studio.

The way the Guv'nor could recall the colouring, position of the sun, cloud formation and greenery of a scene after perhaps a month, a year or ten years was another example of his uncanny memory.

In the case of these vague and indefinite details to go in his picture his memory was as photographically accurate as it was for poetry, historical quotations or figures in economics.

Most of his paintings, as is well known, are landscapes, but he also liked to paint the living things he loved. I spent hours photographing his black swans on the lake, trying to get them into the same position as they had been when he made a quick outline before the birds moved. There was also " drawings of my beloved cat " as he used to describe them when showing them to visitors.

If he was particularly pleased with a painting it would be hung for a time somewhere in the house at Chartwell or Hyde Park Gate; later it would be replaced with another. It was, I think, always his opinion that the next one would be the best of all.

Perhaps I have given the impression that output was the criterion so that the studio was cluttered up with a mass of hasty and therefore inferior works. If so, that is quite the wrong impression. True the number of paintings must be far greater than that of the average full-time artist, but individually many, many hours were spent on each.

The total was large because in painting as in everything else the Guv'nor seemed to find more time in the day than other people. Five thousand words on a book in the morning, plus correspondence, telephone calls and the first outlines of a speech; political decisions over

luncheon, some exercises in the grounds and an hour or so's painting before a rest and then a dinner with more political decisions and appraisals were the normal sort of day.

Painting got no more or no less attention than all the other duties of the day—which was exactly 100 per cent during the time devoted to it.

His Love for Animals

DURING my years as Mr. Churchill's valet, I got to know how well he loved his animals: his horses, his dog, his cat, his pigs, his cows, his black swans, his fish—and one little black goat.

He met the goat during one of his painting holidays in Marrakesh. We were picnicking very luxuriously in the Atlas Mountains with six tables of food and a few bottles of wine cooling in a nearby mountain stream.

Mr. Churchill was painting. As usual he was grumbling all the time to himself.

"That's no good," he muttered and scraped off the oil paint again.

It was an unwritten law that no one ever looked over his shoulder. He could not stand it and made no bones about his feelings if anyone ventured too near.

Suddenly, before we could do anything about it a little Arab boy with a herd of black goats walked straight up to him. The goats surrounded him and the little Arab boy stood and stared at the painting on the easel. We waited for the reprimand. But it never came.

Instead, Mr. Churchill started making a fuss of the little black goats. He walked to the tables laden with food and began feeding a lean and scraggy little animal. Afterwards, this became a daily routine. Every day he would stop painting and call for his little black goat. He would then spend a few minutes petting and feeding it.

All went well until one day a French driver ran into the herd of goats and killed one of them. Of course, it had

to be Mr. Churchill's pet. Everyone was in a quandary. We knew if we told the Guv'nor it would ruin his holiday. We decided to try to mislead him. I went with one of the detectives and roped another black goat. We then hid it in the rocks until Mr. Churchill called "Where is my little black goat? It's time I fed it."

We dragged the creature from its hiding place, it was butting and bleating all the time. Mr. Churchill was puzzled. He could not understand why it tried to bite his hand when he went to feed it. "What's wrong with my dear little goat?" We did not dare tell him. It would have broken his heart. But that understudy goat would not help us with our deception. Eventually Mr. Churchill had to stop trying to make friends. But we never told him what really happened for he could not think of any animal being injured or killed.

Once at Chartwell he saw my dog with a bandage round its paw. It had caught its foot in a door, but a vet had assured me that no bones were broken. That was not good enough for my Guv'nor.

"What is wrong with your little dog, Norman?" He asked. I explained.

"Well, send it to a dog's hospital for a fortnight," he said. "I can't bear to see it limping around."

It cost him £10 10s. 0d. for the fortnight.

Mr. Churchill adored his little poodle Rufus most of all his pets. He could hardly bear to leave Rufus behind when he went away. Whenever this happened he would always appoint one of the Swiss maids—usually Doria, an attractive blonde girl—to look after Rufus. He gave her a long list of instructions about food, grooming, exercise and so on.

He never stopped worrying about the dog. I have even known him to leave a debate at the House of Commons

to tell me to phone Chartwell to find out how Rufus was keeping.

The only thing in which Rufus disappointed his master was that he would not go into the swimming pool. One day Mr. Churchill decided to put Rufus into the water in spite of his reluctance. But he made me go in first—just in case Rufus could not swim. . . .

Few people, even press photographers, seem to appreciate that the Rufus seen so constantly in Sir Winston's company would by now be a canine centenarian. In fact there have been two poodles with this name. The present dog is actually named Rufus II.

The original dog Rufus was killed accidentally. The maids on the staff loved the dog and often volunteered to take him for a walk. When we were at Hyde Park Gate my Guv'nor gave very strict instructions about the dog being kept on a lead until he was well away from the traffic in Hyde Park or Kensington Gardens. Late one evening, a maid took Rufus into the park and as it was near closing time had to take most of the walk in the streets. Rufus, needless to say, tugged and protested in his disappointment. As it was late the girl let him off when she was near Kensington High Street. The dog dashed into the road and was run over.

The crying and terrified girl told Mrs. Churchill what had happened, and she, I presume, broke the news to her husband. I never mentioned the dog again, nor did my Guv'nor, though I know he often started to say something, and I saw him glance at the familiar places where Rufus used to lie.

Fair-minded as my Guv'nor was, the death of the dog affected him so deeply that he could not bring himself ever to speak to the maid who had let Rufus off the lead. She alone of all the servants was deprived of the friendly greeting he gave all of us. Fortunately for all concerned

she was due to return to Switzerland a week or so after the accident.

The time-honoured solution for all dog-lovers who suffer bereavement was in due course followed. From the same West-end pet shop another poodle was obtained—of the same strain as the original Rufus and uncannily like him. It is understandable that most people think that photographs of my Guv'nor with his dog taken as far apart as 1948 and 1955 are of the same animal. Not only in appearance but in character the dogs were identical.

Perhaps there is something in the theory of reincarnation for Rufus II was born almost immediately after Rufus I was killed.

To me, at any rate, it is almost impossible to separate in my memory anecdotes concerning either dog, and I surmise that my Guv'nor must find this difficulty too.

Both dogs not unnaturally became fond of me because I was always around. Sometimes Mr. Churchill wanted Rufus to sleep on his bed at night. I would bring the dog in, who immediately leaped on the coverlet and proceeded to lick his master's hands and face. He would be persuaded to lie somewhere near the foot and curl up in sleep.

But periodically emotion overcame him and he would slither to the head of the bed and resume his affectionate activities. I got to know that it would not be long before I was called to take the dog away so that my Guv'nor could get some sleep.

Rufus's affection for me did, I fear, cause a twinge of jealousy. It was Mr. Churchill's standing order that always when he was returning by train from a trip Rufus should be brought to the station to meet him. Rufus would be let off his lead to dash to his master and be the first to greet him.

One day I happened to be standing close by. Rufus ignored his master and came leaping all over me instead

Of course he loved Rufus too much to blame him. Instead, he turned to me with a hurt look and said quietly: "In future, Norman, I would prefer you to stay in the train until I've said hello."

Sir Winston's lifelong love for animals is reflected in a story the staff heard about one Christmas when he was preparing to carve a home-fattened goose for dinner.

Suddenly he put down the knife and fork and turned to Lady Churchill and said: "You'll have to carve it, Clemmie. This goose was a friend of mine."

Mr. Churchill's affection for all the farm animals was so great that market day on the farm at Chartwell had to be carried out like a combined military secret mission.

Mr. Churchill loved to see the rabbits running about the estate. Even when there was a danger that Chartwell would become overrun with the pests he refused his farm manager's request to gas them. (This was before myxomatosis, of course.)

He was just the same about his wonderful black swans, given to him in September, 1952. Every year we had to lose a few to the foxes. But when we suggested that we should organise a shoot, or trap the foxes, he would not listen.

"I couldn't bear to think the foxes were being hurt," he said.

I thought he might change his attitude when a heron raided his fish pond and lived in style on his Golden Orfe —fish like big goldfish. But he had the ponds covered with wire netting and we were not even allowed to frighten the heron away.

Yet he was crazy about his fish. He made a point of going to the fish ponds every day when we were at Chartwell to feed them with maggots which were specially brought from Yorkshire. It was uncanny to watch him. He would walk to the side of the pond and shout "Yoick, yoick."

The fish would gather in front of him and take the maggots from his hands.

The fishponds presented something of a problem because the different kinds preyed on one another. My Guv'nor, seeing the Golden Orfe growing fat at the expense of heavy goldfish casualties, decided to separate them. He directed the campaign from the edge, I having been ordered to roll up my trousers and paddle round the edge with a net held on the far side by a gardener.

The job was far bigger than we knew. I was given a few minutes to get into some trunks and I then plunged in mud and slime while heaving on the net weighed down by hundreds of squirming fish. We got them separated eventually and my Guv'nor went indoors much pleased with his efforts to stamp out cannibalism in his fishponds.

Tropical fish fascinated Mr. Churchill nearly as much as his lovely Golden Orfe. It was a fascination which almost proved fatal. He kept these tiny, bright, darting little fish in tanks around his study. He had a habit of calling me back after I had seen him into bed in the early hours of the morning.

" Norman, I forgot to feed the little fish," he would say.

He would get up, and spend half an hour feeding them. Then I would have to see him into bed again. I think that he must have known that I did not share his love for little fish at three o'clock in the morning, because he decided once to feed them on his own. As he did so he dropped the lid of one of the tanks into the water. It smashed the immersion heater used to keep the water at the right temperature. He put his hand in to get the lid—and got a terrific shock. It was lucky it was not fatal.

My Guv'nor had a great love for a large tabby cat at Chartwell, called Mickey. In actual fact, Mickey was pretty wild, for he used to roam the estate catching mice, rats and rabbits. Sometimes we would not see him for days.

He had become so acclimatised to a life in the open that he did not really like being indoors—certainly not in the 74° of my Guv'nor's own room. However, some mornings I used to see him sunning himself outside, near the door of the house, when I crossed over from my cottage to go on duty, and knowing how pleased my master would be, I used to take the cat with me. I would hold on to him while I drew the curtains, and then, as Mr. Churchill wakened, I would exclaim:

"Look, sir, Mickey has come in this morning."

It was a mild little deception on my part which really delighted Mr. Churchill. He would immediately sit up in bed and, seeing for himself that Mickey was walking round the room, would demand for him to be lifted on to the bed.

I have heard him cajoling the cat with such queries as "Don't you love me?" and "Aren't you glad to see me, Mickey?" Which, I am afraid, did not impress the animal very much. However, Mickey would hang round for a little time, for he knew full well that within a matter of minutes he would be lapping some cream. This I was at once ordered to go and fetch.

Many an important personage who visited Chartwell during the hours following one of these contrived visits from Mickey, expecting his host to make some tremendous pronouncement on the state of the world or the national political situation, would be somewhat mystified when Mr. Churchill's first exclamation would be to announce: "My cat Mickey came to see me this morning."

Then, within seconds, he would give a piercing and brilliantly worded summary on the news of the day which contrasted strangely with the previous homely statement.

Trivial as this example of Mr. Churchill's quixotic nature may be, I always used to think that the comment about his pet cat and the statement on the news would

have been a newspaper's delight if a reporter could have heard them.

With his generous kindly heart he could unaffectedly show sentiment, while with his brain he maintained his supreme position as a king among men.

I was with Mr. Churchill during the period when he gained considerable fame as the owner of race horses, the most successful being, of course, the famous Colonist II.

Colonist II was French-bred and cost something around £1,500. By the time my Guv'nor sold him in December, 1951, he had won thirteen of the twenty-four races for which he was entered and had earned more than £22,000 in prize money. The horse was bought by Captain P. G. A. Harvey for seven thousand guineas. Expensive as horse racing is, Colonist II was obviously a profitable investment for my Guv'nor.

The sports-loving British public who, of course, like nothing better than a flutter on a horse owned by a popular personality, backed Colonist II to a fantastic extent, the amount of money on him bringing the odds down more than the horse's chances really justified. Consequently he was often odds-on favourite, and even those who had backed another horse were pleased when Colonist II came home first.

I was at Ascot one afternoon and saw a couple of American women almost weeping with joy as Colonist II flashed past the winning post, while they tore up their losing Tote tickets as they cheered. Except perhaps for the Queen's horses, my Guv'nor's colours of pink with chocolate cap and sleeves were the most popular on any racecourse.

Incidentally, after one victory Mr. Churchill gave an example of that uncanny memory of his for an exact quotation for the appropriate occasion. Colonist II had won and friends were crowding round to congratulate my Guv'nor.

With a grin he said:

"Now speed, now speed my dapple grey steed
Thou ever my dapple wert good at need."

It comes from *Ingoldsby Legends.*

Colonist II was often unexpectedly disappointing. The reason was appropriate enough: he hated moving left, and if the course was left-handed then his chances of winning were very slim.

He had fair success with some other horses, notably Pol Roger, but I think that my Guv'nor's great love of animals prevented him becoming a typical figure on the Turf, because he could never regard a horse as a racing or money-making machine. Indeed, I rather suspected that if he had had his way, the beautiful animals which he owned would have lived a life of leisure and luxury, and would not have been subjected to the trials and troubles of racing.

He was, I suspect, persuaded to become a racehorse owner by his son-in-law, Mr. Christopher Soames, and it was indicative of his lack of real interest that the training and entering of his horses was the only activity I know which he left to other people.

In every other matter which concerned him or his home, whether it was the cultivation of the gardens, or the layout of the Conservative Central Office, he had some worthwhile contributions to make from his own study and knowledge of the subject, but, as regards his horses, he left the matter with his trainer, Mr. Walter Nightingall.

During the flat racing season he used to get on the telephone to Mr. Nightingall at Epsom quite early in the morning and ask what the chances for his entry that day would be. Sometimes Mr. Nightingall would point out that there was strong competition and he could not promise a win. He would mention some other horse that he was training in another race and advise my Guv'nor to have a bet on it.

My Guv'nor used to place his wagers with a famous firm of bookmakers with a head office in Scotland, but he must have been one of the most modest punters among the large number of distinguished clients which I know they had. It was quite unusual for my Guv'nor to wager more than £25, and then only because Mr. Nightingall had given such a favourable report on the horse's chances.

Incidentally, I was invariably permitted to share in this good news, straight from the horse's mouth as it were, and I can look back on several most acceptable windfalls after Mr. Churchill suggested that, if I cared, a 10/- or £1 bet would not be an undue risk. It was characteristic of his regard for the welfare of those in his employment that he never gave this advice unless a win, or at least a place, was virtually certain.

The rest of the servants used to rely upon me to tip them off if I heard a good thing. One day I heard the Guv'nor talking about a horse called Pall Mall. I passed the tip on and we all backed it. It won at 100-9.

I told Mr. Churchill about it and he laughed. "Walter Nightingall told me Pall Mall didn't stand a chance, so I didn't back it," he said.

When his horses struck an unlucky phase, almost continually losing, he used to complain in a rather bewildered sort of way.

This was another indication that he had not the true gambler's outlook of fatalism, or belief in good or bad luck.

As living creatures rather than as prize winners, he adored his horses. I remember on a June day in 1951 getting up at the usual time and glancing out of the bedroom window of my cottage towards my Guv'nor's bedroom, and noting with consternation that the curtains were already drawn back. He had said nothing to me or

the previous night about getting up early, and I rushed over to find the room empty.

I discovered from the other servants that late on the previous evening there had been a call from Epsom to say that there was an outbreak of coughing among the horses.

My Guv'nor was so worried about this that he had brooded on it during the night, and, on an impulse, risen very early, ordered a car and, with his detective, hurriedly and untidily dressed and unshaven, had rushed over to Epsom to see if the animals were seriously ill. It was not a serious matter in the way that he meant, although, of course, the coughing prevented the horses running in races, but he had to satisfy himself that everything possible was being done for their welfare.

About this time also I remember the phone call telling us that his horse, Canyon Kid, had dropped dead through heart failure. The news shocked Mr. Churchill terribly and for the rest of that day, and indeed for several days afterwards, he was cast in the deepest gloom, and was constantly muttering " Poor Canyon Kid! "

I have known many people show less sorrow when a close relative has died than Mr. Churchill did when Canyon Kid went to his happy hunting grounds.

The Man and His Clothes

THE post of valet to the most illustrious man of our time could have been a formidable and even impossible task for me, without experience of a job for which it is said men are born, not trained.

I was fortunate, however, in having a tolerant and patient master. Sir Winston believes that clothes are made for the man and not man for the clothes. He demands comfort in what he wears, and having discovered a suit or garment that he likes neither time nor fashion will influence him to change.

That is not to say that he is not very conscious of the mannerly advantages of the appropriate dress for the occasion. He has a passion for cleanliness in both his person and his clothes. He changed his shirt three times a day at least.

However busy he was he would be ready to devote time and trouble to changing into the appropriate suit for the varied activities of a typical day.

Even in the free and easy atmosphere of his home, when perhaps there were no visitors at luncheon or dinner he would dress for the meals, changing in between for a painting session in his studio or a stroll round the grounds with Rufus.

My Guv'nor is, I suppose, the despair of the tailoring profession because of his loyalty to old fashioned clothes. This attitude is due to his ever-present sense of tradition.

I think, for example, he deprecates the deterioration in the dress of M.P.s and he would never attend the House

in anything but formal clothes and, of course, at the opening of the session and similar occasions he would wear a frock coat.

Similarly, in his weekly audiences with King George VI and afterwards with the Queen, when he had become Prime Minister again, he would never regard these as unofficial visits between close friends, as in some ways they were, but would dress with the care of a Minister summoned to attend Queen Victoria, if that period marks the height of Court etiquette.

Although in fact he really dressed himself, he loved to have someone around to find things and to help him. Virtually all his life he has had a personal servant in attendance, and the story is sometimes told of his amazement that it is possible to live without one.

It happened in the 'thirties. Through illness, his man was unable to accompany him at the last moment when Mr. Churchill was off to the South of France.

He was to be the guest at a house party in the villa of Maxine Elliott, and on arrival he greeted his hostess with the remark:

"I came all the way from London without a servant. It was quite simple,"

"How brave of you," Miss Elliott replied.

My first morning's duties remain vividly in my mind.

When he had completed his usual perusal of the newspapers he got out of bed and heard from me that his bath was ready. Off he went.

The knee-length dressing gown lay crumpled on the corridor floor. I watched my Guv'nor as he strode towards the bathroom smoking his cigar. He removed his cigar to say a cheerful "Good morning" to the Swiss maid vacuum-cleaning the floor. She glanced up and returned his greeting.

There was no astonishment on her face as the Guv'nor —ready to step into his bath—walked by.

I soon became accustomed. On the one occasion when I felt ill I lay in bed in a room adjoining Mr. Churchill's and could hear and sometimes see him. When he got up he was told that I was not well.

A few minutes later I heard the bathroom door slam and wondered how my Guv'nor would cope without his valet. I knew he always shaved himself with a safety razor before wallowing in a bath filled to the brim with water. From my bedroom I could hear the splashing as he sponged himself with the outsize sponge he always used. I listened for the signal which always told me Mr. Churchill's bathing was almost over. I did not have to wait long before I heard a noise like a whale "blowing."

Mr. Churchill had his mouth under the water and was blowing bubbles. He seemed to like to do it just before he left the tub. The bathroom door opened and out he came with the outsize bath towel—it was really two sewn together—draped loosely over his shoulders.

As he padded barefoot back to his bedroom I wondered how he would get on without me. I always towelled him down and handed him his clothes.

Next day, when I did the towelling, Mr. Churchill made it clear to me that he was glad I was back. But it was characteristic of his consideration for others that he made certain I was perfectly fit again. Not even his dependence on the presence of someone to assist influenced him to demand some other man servant to "stand in" for me, or that I should start work if I had not recovered.

Often his favourite "siren suit" would be his dress for the day. He had several of these, specially made, and very comfortable they are. With this suit he would not need one of his favourite bow ties, again specially made and knotted in a manner which defies imitation.

While he was in the house, Mr. Churchill used to wear his slippers of blue velvet with his initials W and S on each in gold embroidery. He first wore them in the war. They were made by a Bond Street firm and cost £14 a pair. This was, I think, the only affectation in dress that he had, and he was extremely attached to those slippers, but not because of these gold initials as much as for their comfort.

After luncheon, if it was reasonably fine, he would call for his hat and coat, put on his shoes in the hall, and picking up a couple of rubber balls to throw for his dog, Rufus, go out for a walk in the grounds.

If it was a day when informality was all right, then he would usually wear a sports shirt with his "siren suit" or some old and comfortable lounge suit. The shirts he obtained from the United States because he preferred the style of the collar adopted in that country.

If, however, some guests were expected at luncheon, and a certain amount of formality was desirable, then he wore a white shirt with an attached soft collar.

His rather old-fashioned clothes which he so often wore on public occasions were not so much indicative of a public career that went back for more than half a century, but for the prolonged period that he wore his individual suits.

He preferred the old ones, both the formal morning dress and the lounge suit, to anything that a modern tailor could produce.

For evening wear he had two dinner jackets and trousers and two suits of "tails" which were very old indeed, but even when I went to the extent of a subterfuge of having one of them copied exactly because I did not like my master to go out in what was to my mind a rather shabby suit, he instantly detected the ruse and insisted that he felt uncomfortable in it.

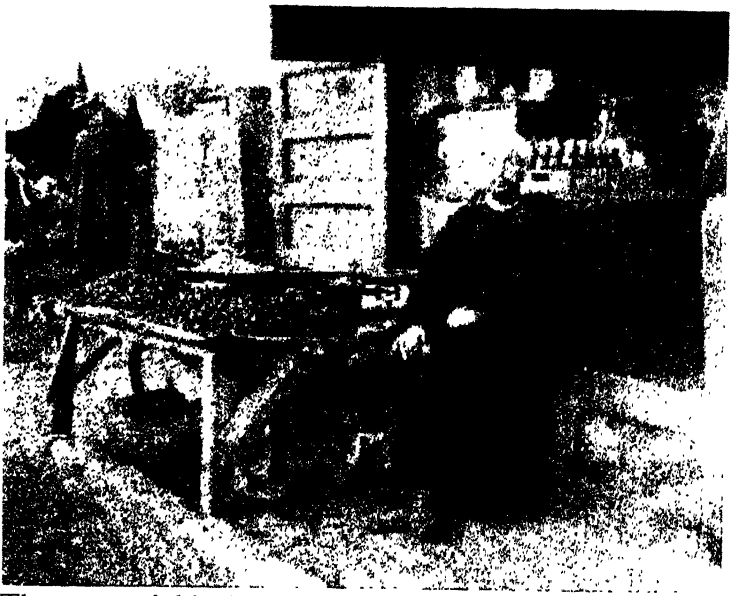
I do not think this could have been quite true for the

North African tribesmen gather round the plane which took Mr. Churchill for his holiday at Marrakesh.

Mr. Churchill admiring the mounts of the specially chosen cavalry guard ordered to protect him during his North African holiday.

Every day on holiday in Morocco, McGowan had to set up a draught excluder and a sunshade in the remote mountain area where his master wanted to paint.

The scene in a gorge of the Atlas Mountains which was the subject of one of the Churchill oil paintings.



The owner of this shop in Marrakesh found it more lucrative to let his shop to a famous artist than to sell his Coca Cola and selection of trinkets.

This scene was the basis of a painting in oils by Mr. Churchill which he titled " Eureka."

The little black goat which became Mr. Churchill's firm friend until its untimely death necessitated a deception which failed!

More painting on holiday: this time in Madeira, a stay cut short by the need to rush back for a General Election.

suit had been copied with tremendous care, and even the changes in shape, caused by prolonged wear from the original cut, had been faithfully followed.

While talking about the way that my Guv'nor kept to well tried and long owned clothes, I am reminded of the interest his hat aroused when he was in Washington in January, 1952.

It was that very characteristic piece of headgear which he wore, which some people referred to as a "sawn-off stove pipe" and is in fact known as a Cambridge hat. All sorts of men's shops in the United States hurriedly made enquiries from American manufacturers as to where they could obtain them, and on being told that they were essentially English, cables came to London, where agents eventually discovered the source of my Guv'nor's purchases, a famous hatters in St. James's Street.

The interesting thing was that when the staff turned up the records meticulously kept at this establishment, it was discovered that the last time Mr. Churchill had bought one of these hats was in 1919.

I think that this 33-year-old hat was the one that he was wearing on his U.S. visit because it was the best of a number that I had to look after, and some must have been forty and more years old.

Indeed, when my Guv'nor celebrated fifty years in politics—he had been elected as an M.P. for Oldham on 3rd October, 1900—I rather suspected that it would have been possible for him to mark the occasion by wearing the same hat as he had on half a century earlier if it had come to his mind.

It is of interest by the way, to note that this anniversary occurred in the month that the new Chamber for the House of Commons was completed.

My Guv'nor had, of course, been tremendously interested in every detail of reconstruction and by common

consent by both parties and by the Office of Works, he was, as the country's greatest Parliamentarian, the consultant on all that was done, but as most people know, his tremendous regard for tradition sometimes makes it difficult for him to accept modern developments as being of unalloyed benefit.

There had been some discussion about the use of fluorescent lighting in some parts of the new buildings. Towards the end of October they were switched on for the first time in the Inner Lobby, and I was near my Guv'nor when he strolled with a colleague to see what it looked like.

He stood for a moment gazing at the cold brilliant light, and then muttered: "Heavens, the Moscow Underground!"

Modest as my Guv'nor's requirements in dress were, I had a vast wardrobe to care for. Gestures of admiration by learned bodies and service units are more than a gesture to Sir Winston. The regalia and clothes involved in the ceremonies are kept and treasured. Thus we had the gowns and scarves of various honorary degrees, such as the Doctorates of Law at Belfast and Harvard Universities, the regalia of worshipful companies and so on.

Uniforms played a very important part in my Guv'nor's life. He loved to dress up in the uniforms of the R.A.F., as a Colonel of the Queen's Own Hussars, his old regiment of which he was the Colonel-in-Chief, and of Trinity House.

On the first occasion that I was with him when he was to wear the uniform of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports there was quite a bother. We were at Chartwell and as I could not find the uniform there I telephoned to Hyde Park Gate to arrange for a car to pick it up. Unfortunately the uniform was not there either.

No one had any idea where it was and I did not dare ask Mr. Churchill. In desperation I got in touch with a firm in London which hired out dress suits and uniforms. The day was saved and Mr. Churchill went out resplendent in his favourite uniform.

But there was more trouble to come. As my Guv'nor was meeting the officers of the Cinque Ports one of his epaulets fell off and he had to continue his tour of duty as Warden minus one epaulet.

Characteristically, his only comment to me was: "It's a good job I personally fasten my braces."

Decorations were always a headache to me. For instance, if Mr. Churchill was attending any function that had something to do with the U.S.A. he always wore in his lapel a miniature bar of the United States D.S.M. which was awarded, as usual, personally by the President of the U.S.A. At the time Mr. Churchill received it it was Franklin Roosevelt who awarded it.

When my Guv'nor was wearing full evening dress, which he secretly detested, he wore a Sash of Honour conferred by the country which was being entertained or entertaining him. This invariably brought about an argument and I would take special pains to make sure on which side the sash was worn, but we always had a heated discussion.

Once, when we were in France, the argument was prolonged. I was preparing him for an important reception in Nancy, the ancient capital of French Lorraine.

I had laid out his morning clothes. In the left lapel of the jacket I had placed the ribbon of his Medaille Militaire. As he studied himself in the full-length mirror he suddenly spotted the ribbon.

"You've put it in the wrong lapel," he said.

I assured him that this decoration is always worn in the left lapel like all official decorations.

"It is worn in the right lapel," he insisted.

I did not want my Guv'nor to make a *faux pas* in public so I continued to argue.

"I'm sorry, sir, but the Medaille Militaire ribbon is worn in the left lapel," I told him firmly. "And the medal itself is worn on the left breast."

I even told him I had checked with the French Embassy, but Mr. Churchill insisted that I should change it. Then he stalked his way out of the room.

I assumed that he must have got mixed up with a rule about sons of dead Medaille Militaire holders wearing it on the right.

I was worrying because I knew that all the holders of this particular decoration in Nancy and district had been invited to the reception to meet Mr. Churchill. What would happen, I wondered?

I suppose I was wearing a smug look when he came back from the reception because my Guv'nor grinned as he came into the bedroom.

Rather sheepishly he said: "Norman, the French are the best diplomats in the world." Then he told me what had happened. "I was introduced to all the holders of the Medaille Militaire in Nancy," he said. "They all wore the ribbon in the left lapel.

"But before the reception was over they all discreetly changed it over to the right lapel for my benefit," he added.

We had a similar clash over the Danish award—the Order of the Elephant—which is one of Sir Winston's most prized decorations. I told him the bright blue sash was worn from the left shoulder to the right hip. He insisted that he wanted it the other way round. When he reached the Danish Embassy in London, officials took him into an ante-room. When Mr. Churchill came out he was wearing the sash on the right hip . . .

Another uniform incident occurred when Mr. Churchill was giving a cocktail party for 506 Squadron, R.A.F., and he decided to wear his uniform as Honorary Air Commodore.

This meant his wearing an officer's shirt with a detachable collar. Getting the collar attached was a major operation as Mr. Churchill had not worn the shirt for several years. He loathes soft detachable collars.

When travelling on the *Queen Mary* in December, 1951, Mr. Churchill, without any warning, asked for his Royal Yacht Squadron uniform. Fortunately I had packed it but came up against a snag. The cap of the uniform was so old and battered that it just could not be worn.

I managed to borrow a cap of the right size from one of the ship's officers and all seemed well. Mr. Churchill gave the officer an autographed photo.

Dress swords to go with the uniforms were a headache as most of them in the house were of a Naval pattern and embossed with an anchor on the hilt. This made it very difficult to determine one from the other.

On one occasion Mr. Churchill was changing at the House of Commons into a dress uniform. The uniform had been sent on ahead in a case to the House and I was taking the sword with me. I travelled by bus and left the sword in it. I had not time to go searching for it so sent someone else.

While the search was going on I was dressing Mr. Churchill. Eventually he was ready to buckle on the sword and I had to go to extremes to delay him. Then, just as my Guv'nor was getting annoyed about the delay the door opened a crack and in came the sword.

Mr. Churchill's frown changed to a grin. He had been

perfectly aware that I had been delaying matters because the sword was missing.

He often remained silent with me—and also with far more exalted persons—just to see how we would extricate ourselves from a quandary which I, and they, fondly believed was effectively hidden from "the Old Man."

The Inner Man

As everyone knows Sir Winston Churchill is blessed with an excellent digestion and has a lively regard for the pleasures and benefits of good food and good wine. Not for him is the ascetic regimen of so many famous men of advancing years. He unaffectedly enjoys his meals—and the conversation over brandy and a cigar which can follow.

Yet he has not the jaded palate of so many people who have been able to indulge their tastes. Plain and simple dishes he prefers at all times, and in fact he most carefully disciplines himself as to the amount that he shall eat and drink.

In his home while I was there the cook was Mrs. Landenar, a woman who excelled at her craft. She knew my Guv'nor's tastes to a nicety and perfectly cooked meals arrived with machine-like precision no matter how varied the times that they were required.

On waking he had a glass of orange juice. It was bottled, for my Guv'nor could not stand the juice of fresh oranges nor did he like the fresh fruit itself.

Breakfast was, of course, taken in bed. He always insisted on a pot of tea and an outsize cup for this, the only tea he drank all day.

The food was very English and substantial, but it was positively unique in that he invariably had something hot and something cold: with bacon and egg he would demand a slice of cold ham, for example. Often we knew on the previous night what the cold dish should be, for

at dinner he would put on one side of the dish a cutlet or a leg of chicken and tell the servant: "I'll have this for breakfast."

About an hour after breakfast I would place his first whisky and soda of the day beside him. For the rest of the day the tumbler was never empty, but he drank very slowly, absent mindedly sipping it from time to time and making each glass last about two hours. It was literally drowned in soda at the outset and as ice cubes had to be in it, which melted long before he had finished, the drink was a very innocuous one.

Luncheon was a simple affair, not often served before 1.30, and sometimes considerably later. Despite the fact that Sir Winston has invariably taken no exercise he always has an excellent appetite for the meal, although he had little time for the more intricate dishes which were sometimes served at public functions.

At Chartwell the cook knew only too well that she could not go far wrong if she served what my Guv'nor called "good red beef," which was no doubt a symbol to him of the England he loved so much.

During the first months of my employment meat was still rationed and often very short indeed. It is probably of interest to people in countries outside England who cannot imagine that a man in such a position as my Guv'nor would eat no more than the least important person in the country, but I can assure them that there was never more than the ration at Chartwell.

On one occasion, indeed, when a local butcher had surplus meat and was rather generous in his allocation to the household, my Guv'nor made a strong protest and said that in no circumstances was any extra above the ration to be accepted.

Often indeed, we individually had less than our ration, and I should stress that everybody in the household

from the most junior kitchenmaid to my Guv'nor and his wife, shared and shared alike, so that the cook had to exert miracles to stretch the food out for the numerous guests which they entertained.

It was not, however, difficult with a farm on the Estate to obtain plenty of poultry, although I know that Mr. Churchill got rather bored with the white meat of chickens and ducks and secretly longed for the more robust food that he preferred. In addition, of course, it was impossible to serve poultry at the table without him wondering if it was a chicken or a duck that he knew.

Devoted as he is to English customs, afternoon tea did not interest him. Sporadic sips at his diluted whisky refreshed him until dinner time, which was usually at 8.30 p.m.

My Guv'nor liked plain food: soup, chicken and then his favourite meat—beef.

He had a passion for cream. In fact on occasions he was almost rude about it. He would always almost empty the jug himself and look round the table.

"Does anyone want cream?" he would ask rather pugnaciously.

I think it was his liking for cream that made Mrs. Churchill worry so much about his waistline. She wanted him to do exercise to get it down. Every morning she would ask me: "Norman, has Mr. Churchill done his exercises?"

I always had to make some excuse, for he did not like doing exercises.

Now and then there would be a fish course. It might be a Dover sole, and my Guv'nor had a particular liking for that very inexpensive fish called whiting. The only point about this was that it had to be served with its tail in its mouth.

In winter time he had a great delight in a good Irish

stew—a dish which the Swiss maids who, by the employment regulation, were not normally able to stay for very long, had to learn how to help to make in the really traditional way.

Ice cream was regularly the sweet—a plain ice, and with Sir Winston's characteristic dislike of fripperies in his food, or for that matter in any part of his life, he had no time for the more exotic creations which hotels and restaurants tried to produce to please him at official functions.

When they were in season, by the way, there would be some oysters at the beginning of the meal. Almost invariably, champagne was served from the beginning to the end of dinner, and my Guv'nor had enormous faith in its value as an article of diet.

"A single glass of champagne imparts a feeling of exhilaration. The nerves are braced: the imagination is agreeably stirred; the wits become more nimble. A bottle produces a contrary effect. Excess causes a comatose insensibility. So it is with war: and the quality of both is best discovered by sipping."

That is a comment on champagne which I read in my Guv'nor's book "The Malakand Field Force," written more than fifty years before, and I think he has followed his own advice ever since.

Naturally, the habit has developed his taste so that he must be one of the world's most expert connoisseurs of champagne. All his vintages were good and for special occasions the cellars could provide some outstanding ones. This brings me to one of the few stories where the joke was against him.

Mr. Churchill insisted to all his friends that he was the only person in the world who could get 1928 Pol Roger champagne. This was because Madame Pol Roger, in

gratitude for the liberation of France, had ordered that no one but Mr. Churchill should be supplied with it.

His pride was hurt at an American Embassy dinner. A bottle was placed casually in front of him as he sat down. It was Pol Roger 1928.

Mr. Churchill recognised it. He kept eyeing it suspiciously. Then he had it opened and tasted it. No doubt at all. It was 1928 Pol Roger!

He called General Eisenhower, his host, to his side and questioned him.

At last Ike told him the secret. Madame Pol Roger had not broken her word. Eisenhower had been given the bottle by an American officer who found a secret cache of the champagne during the war. It seems that General Eisenhower had heard of Mr. Churchill's boast and had awaited the chance to score off his friend. Both men laughed about it. But Mr. Churchill's laugh was, I believe, a little rueful.

Port and Stilton cheese completed the meal, and then came the brandy. It was then, of course, that my Guv'nor was in the expansive mood when it must have been a delight to be his guest and in these after-dinner periods which might go on for an hour or more, there came many of the famous sayings ascribed to him. It is my constant regret that I, as a servant, could rarely be present at these times, when my Guv'nor's brilliance in conversation must have made the hours pass in a flash.

Now about his famous cigars. Carping political adversaries have even tried to make capital out of Sir Winston's love for them. While I was in his employment, just before his 77th birthday, there was a question in the House designed to reveal that my Guv'nor was spending dollars on direct importation of cigars.

"I have not for quite a long time imported any cigars from hard currency areas," he told the House in a formal

tone. Then with a grin he added: "I have nevertheless received some from time to time."

Gifts from abroad, sent in admiration and esteem, of this kind were always arriving, and when there could be no suggestion of bribery or commercial exploitation it would, of course, have been very ungracious to reject them.

Just after the silly question about cigars the Mayor of Jaligny, in France, a centre of the poultry breeding industry, sent a mammoth turkey. Some time before, the "oyster king" of Melbourne, Australia, Mr. Marmares, sent a box of frozen Australian oysters, and in August, 1952, I remember a charming young woman, wearing a hat made with a Victory V as its decoration, flew in from Cigar Valley, Hartford, Connecticut, with a big box of cheroots.

Although Sir Winston is nearly always seen with a cigar in his mouth, while I was employed by him he smoked only nine a day.

They are rather strong, as Prince Georg of Denmark found out one night when he was dining at Hyde Park Gate. The Prince had never smoked before. Repeatedly he refused Mr. Churchill's request: "You must have one. You don't know what you're missing."

At last the Prince agreed. He lit it, took three puffs and was violently ill. Mr. Churchill thought it was a great joke.

My Guv'nor called me into his bedroom one morning soon after I started with him and said: "Norman, I want to show you how I like to light my cigar."

First he took off the band and pierced the cigar with a long match, of a kind he had specially imported from America.

Then he lit the candle which was always at his bedside, and warmed the end in its flame.

Next he lovingly wrapped a piece of gummed brown paper round the other end.

"I designed that myself," he told me. "I call it a Belly-bando. It stops the end from becoming too wet when I chew it."

I never saw Mr. Churchill finish a cigar. He used to leave about half in the ash-tray.

But those cigar ends were never wasted. I had special orders about them. No matter where we went—anywhere in the world—I had to collect all the butts and put them in a special box. That box was brought back to Chartwell and the butts were handed to Kearns, one of the gardeners, who used to smoke them in his pipe. And whenever Mr. Churchill saw Kearns about the estate he made a point of checking that he was getting his supplies regularly.

Matters of Health

SIR Winston Churchill's constitution is a natural phenomenon. Anyone who has personal dealings with him knows that. His energy at the end of a long day is as great as at the beginning.

When people recall how he exhausted his advisers during the war, and talk of the relays of secretaries needed to fill the working day they tend to forget that the man who provides the work and gives the orders is never changed.

He is completely master of himself because he knows himself. His body and his mind are his willing slaves only because he has studied their requirements, their capabilities, and their human limitations.

He does not, whatever people may think, over-exert himself. What would be a day bringing utter exhaustion to others is to him precisely what he knows full well his constitution is capable of handling.

However late he got to bed—and often it was very late indeed—I never saw him fagged out in the manner described as " too weary to sleep."

Despite his illnesses during the war, and the troubles in very recent years, Sir Winston is a man of great physical strength—far greater than the public who never see him doing anything particularly strenuous can realise.

In the house and in the grounds at Chartwell he often indicated how strong he was—indeed, he used far more energy than I thought it was advisable for him to do at his age.

Many people also think he is a man of quite short sta-

ture. In fact, it is not only his personality that dominates one when face to face with him but the fact that he is a tall man.

I think that the rather dumpy appearance that he may sometimes have in photographs and newsreels comes from the fact that his shoulders are very broad indeed, and, of course, he is quite a heavyweight. For most of the time that I was his valet his weight was 15 stone 1 lb., and it never varied any more than an ounce or two month in and month out.

My Guv'nor's exhuberant health in his late seventies amazed me when I read accounts of his early life. It is said that premature babies usually turn out geniuses so the fact that he arrived in this world early and while his mother was attending a St. Andrew's Night ball at Blenheim was probably an asset rather than an obstacle in the life ahead.

But later he suffered a number of setbacks. As an eight-year-old boy his health suffered severely from the harsh condition of a preparatory school at Ascot where he conducted a lonely and hopeless battle against the sadistic proprietor.

Before he was twelve he twice caught pneumonia and in his teens he almost killed himself while staying with his aunt, Lady Wimborne, at Bournemouth.

Playing with his cousin he tried to take a short cut by jumping over the parapet of an ornamental bridge into the springy branches of the pine trees which surrounded it. The branches failed to support him and he dropped thirty feet, rupturing a kidney and making him unconscious for three days.

The needful operation was a serious one for those times, and for nine months he was forced to convalesce.

Then in 1896 he dislocated his shoulder when disembarking from a troopship at Bombay, aggravating the con-

dition by playing polo within a day or two, despite the doctor's warning that the strapped-up shoulder should not be used for some weeks.

In 1922, just before an election campaign at Dundee, he was operated on for appendicitis and conducted his meetings while very weak and in great pain.

"I am without an office, without a seat, without a party, and without an appendix," he said after his defeat in that contest.

In 1931 he was knocked down by a cab in New York.

"I do not understand why I was not broken like an egg shell or squashed like a gooseberry," he commented, in recalling the accident.

His recovery from pneumonia attacks during the war were nothing short of miraculous.

Sometimes I thought I detected in Sir Winston's make-up a sense of leaving things to destiny. He certainly had a sort of fatalism about matters beyond human control.

He was asked by someone on his seventy-fifth birthday if he had any fear of death.

"I am ready to meet my Maker," he quietly answered. "Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter."

Like most people who have suffered from attacks of pneumonia, Sir Winston is very susceptible to colds.

As soon as winter came on we all dreaded the signs of an attack. Not that Mr. Churchill was a bad patient, quite the reverse, but we knew that no matter what action we took the cold would run its course.

His colds were very heavy while they lasted and must have made life miserable for him, but they never prevented him carrying on with his work at the same tempo as usual, although the doctors always insisted that his outside engagements should be cancelled as a precautionary measure.

Whenever this was done rumours spread about the country that he was dying or even dead. I think that not infrequently these stories were put around with some malicious intent.

They always amused my Guv'nor as much as they annoyed his friends and political colleagues. In February, 1951, M.P.s and all sorts of offices in Whitehall—even the Information Room at Scotland Yard—were dealing with so many telephone enquiries that Mr. Churchill was persuaded to issue a formal statement.

He took a few minutes to compose it in his head and then gleefully dictated the following to a secretary to be issued to the press.

"I am informed from many quarters that a rumour has been put about that I died this morning. This is quite untrue."

The same sort of rumour occurred towards the end of November, 1951, and on this occasion the press photograph agencies were invited to send down some cameramen to Chartwell to photograph my Guv'nor in a pose, as he put it, to show that he was "now living."

Much more aggravating than the colds from which he suffered in wintertime were the periodic outbreaks of very painful boils. In March, 1951, they were so bad that he could not, with any comfort, have put on formal clothes, with the result that his attendance at Sheffield when he was to be granted the Freedom of the City had to be postponed for a month.

The best available medical advice and all the latest antibiotic drugs were apparently useless in clearing up this trouble permanently.

My Guv'nor was rather prone, like so many of us, to be impressed by the claims of patent medicines and proprietary cures, and we had all sorts of salves, lotions, tablets and medicines which were tried from time to time.

Sometimes during the attacks of boils, as soon as the doctors had left him, he would call for me and say: "Norman, we'll try that stuff we bought in France," or "I think the ointment that Italian doctor prescribed would be better than all this treatment."

I suspected frequently that my Guv'nor tended to fasten on some more or less harmless ailment that he could imagine he had. Most people blessed with wonderful health seem to have this foible.

We had quite an array of pills and medicines which had been purchased and tried once or twice, and I think the most popular ones were those which allegedly produced blissful sleep.

There can hardly be a man alive of his age and with such responsibilities who slept, as I know from seeing him while he was in bed, with the dreamless serenity of a small child. But despite this my master had a belief on some nights that he would not be able to get to sleep, and then he would ask me for a couple of aspirins or some sort of soporific drink. Never, may I say, did he use any of those insidious drugs which are habit-forming.

His great friend and medical adviser, Lord Moran, constantly watched over his patient with such care that the ailments my Guv'nor liked to ponder on never existed—or if there were symptoms, they were soon dealt with.

My Guv'nor had a deep regard for Lord Moran. I recall his extreme pleasure when he was invited to address the Royal College of Physicians on the occasion of the presentation of an Annigoni portrait of his lordship in July, 1951.

My Guv'nor was in particularly fine form. He was already an honorary surgeon and had now been made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians.

"Unless there is a very marked shortage of capable men in both these professions," he told the delighted doctors in his audience, "I shall not press myself upon you."

He added that being temperamentally inclined to precision and sharp edge it might be he thought that he would choose the surgeon's table if the necessity arose.

Then, in serious vein he paid his testimony to the man who watched over his health during the war years and afterwards.

" I know Charles Moran almost as well as he knows me," he said. " I am deeply indebted to him."

The most serious, if brief, crisis in health which occurred during my employment in the Churchill household happened suddenly and unexpectedly. Mr. Churchill had a rather painful whitlow on his finger and it was decided to remove it under a local anaesthetic.

An anaesthetist came down from one of the great London hospitals and he used some new substance, on instructions and with full approval of the surgeons, of course.

Mr. Churchill was evidently allergic to this anaesthetic, for his arm began to swell up and then face and limbs.

Prompt measures were taken to counteract the effects, but naturally these took time to produce results and for some hours my Guv'nor was extremely distressed and, to a layman's eye, quite ill.

Worried as I was, I had to spare some sympathy for the unfortunate young anaesthetist who through no fault of his, had been responsible. He was almost petrified with fear, and I considered it reasonable to give him some of my master's whisky to comfort him. He gulped the spirit like a dying man.

Holiday Adventures

HOLIDAY times with my Guv'nor were exciting and hectic. They enabled me to see some of the loveliest places in the world, and I was always able to enjoy myself because Mr. Churchill was most considerate and constantly checking that I was relaxing and benefiting from the vacation.

In Venice, for example, his first question each morning was always: "Have you been for a swim yet?"

If I said "No" he would tell me: "Well trot off now and have one. I'll look after myself."

The Venetian holiday in August and September, 1951, was largely a result of bad weather. Mr. and Mrs. Churchill went first to Paris, staying at the Hotel Lotti. We went on from there to Annecy in the foothills of the French Alps of Haute Savoie. The intention was to have a quiet holiday there and to do some painting, but unfortunately it rained continuously.

Mr. Churchill's decision to search for the sun farther south meant that no sooner than the new destination was chosen than we had to be ready to go. This resulted in quite a formidable amount of work.

According to the French Railways our party was travelling with fifty-five suitcases and trunks and sixty-five smaller articles. However, we were soon off, a booking having been made at the luxurious Excelsior Palace on the Lido. Mr. and Mrs. Churchill were given the honeymoon suite of King Farouk and Queen Narriman, who had been there not long before.

The Excelsior is a vast hotel with some 380 rooms, and, of course, its very bigness enabled Mr. Churchill to enjoy some privacy in what was otherwise a resort very full of people who simply stopped and stared wherever we went.

It was, by the way, on the train to Venice that my Guv'nor nearly had a serious, and what might have been a fatal, accident.

Anxious to obtain a glimpse of the city as we approached it, he leaned right out of the train window.

I was standing near him, also eager to see a place which was, of course, unknown to me, when the detective wrenched Mr. Churchill backwards by the shoulder.

A split second later a concrete pylon carrying the overhead wires of the electric railway flashed past, only about a foot from the side of the train.

My Guv'nor's smiling comment was: "Anthony Eden nearly got a new job then, didn't he?"

Most of the time in Venice was spent painting, and it says much for the politeness and courtesy of the Venetians that whenever Mr. Churchill decided to sit at his easel in some private grounds in order to escape the hordes of tourists he was given a quiet and genuine welcome and then left entirely to his own devices, apart from an occasional enquiry as to whether there was anything he wanted.

Mr. and Mrs. Churchill did, however, go sightseeing quite a lot, in the cool of either the morning or the evening, and many a tourist envied the pretty young actress who accompanied them. She was Anne Crawford, who was staying in the hotel, and with whom my Guv'nor and Mrs. Churchill struck up a friendship.

Sometimes in the evening, he used to go to the Casino and play Chemin de Fer, and I am sorry to say that he was consistently unlucky.

This did not matter very much as his stakes were very

modest—indeed the minimum that was permitted in the rooms where he played.

At the time of the visit to Venice there was a strong rumour that a film company was planning a film about the Guv'nor—to be made after his death. He got quite a kick out of the idea.

The rumour stated that he was to be portrayed by Orson Welles, who seemed to be following him around Venice.

They used to bow to one another in the hotel and then Orson Welles used to spend hours watching Mr. Churchill's mannerisms from behind a newspaper or magazine.

The Guv'nor also used to bow to a man the local police believed to be an assassin. He was always quite calm in the face of any physical danger.

One item in a local newspaper during the holiday made Mr. Churchill roar with laughter.

Some reporter, trying to provide his readers with every possible detail of the city's distinguished visitor, must have got hold of an English reference book and read that my Guv'nor was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. This presumably baffled the reporter in an attempt to translate it or even to understand what the expression signified.

The version he managed to produce was "Doge of Dover."

Hordes of press photographers at the outset of the holiday cruised around in boats in an effort to get a picture of Mr. Churchill swimming. It is a pity that some did not use colour film for my Guv'nor sported a pair of fire-red bathing trunks.

He was naturally annoyed that motor boats should approach so near, but he was not really furious. His splashing of water on the cameramen and their apparatus was playful rather than vengeful. It had the desired effect of making them withdraw.

The first holiday on which I accompanied Mr. Churchill was to Madeira over Christmas and New Year, 1949-50.

We went there on the *Durban Castle* and as the ship moved into the harbour at Funchal the whole of the mountainside behind the town was decorated with coloured lights to welcome Mr. Churchill. Even in the moonlight I could well understand why the Portuguese explorers who discovered the island in 1420 refused to launch boats and land because they believed the place was enchanted.

My Guv'nor, with his consuming interest in history, was fascinated by the island's story as well as by its beauty.

The Carthaginians, I was told, had been there 2,500 years ago, and another item of historical interest was that the first governor of Porto Santo, the nearby island which was first colonised, had a daughter who married Columbus, and it was the stories she told that excited her husband to see what other delights lay in the ocean to the west of Europe.

The holiday in Madeira was cut short by news that there was to be a general election on February 23rd, 1950. Mr. Churchill made immediate arrangements to fly home. Hardly had he replaced the phone receiver before he was asking to see a representative of the airline.

Next morning there was half a gale blowing and the skipper of the flying boat which was to take us home came to Mr. Churchill's room.

" It's too rough to take off," he said with finality.

Mr. Churchill walked to the window overlooking the bay. He looked out for a moment. Then he turned and said firmly:

" It's not too rough. Norman, get packed at once."

Mr. Churchill was completely unconcerned on the very bumpy flight. He even decided to have an airborne bath in the special canvas bath we always carried around. He

splashed away quite happily as the huge plane bounced about the sky.

Almost exactly a year later we were off again—this time for five weeks' holiday in Marrakesh. This comparatively remote place had great sentimental memories for my Guv'nor.

He had gone there first after hearing Mr. Lloyd George praise it. That was many years ago. Then in 1936 he went there while worried and depressed about the British Government's weakly attitude towards Mussolini's rape of Abyssinia. There was also a brief and much-needed holiday at Marrakesh after the conference with Roosevelt at Casablanca and lastly after his serious attack of pneumonia in 1948.

It was during that convalescence that he struck up a deep friendship with Thami el Glaoui Pasha, a magnificent figure of a man in the real tradition of North African chiefs and with whom he dined on his latest visit.

We went to Morocco by air and Mr. Churchill first entered the public dining room of the Hotel Mamounia on Christmas Eve.

The hotel was full of police and native guards. Detectives were on duty in the corridors and tough-looking and colourfully-garbed native troops were stationed in the hotel grounds.

A day or two after we arrived I was having coffee in the suite of rooms reserved for our party with Sergeant Ted Murray, one of the Guv'nor's detectives, when suddenly a piercing scream echoed through the hotel. We all knew it was Mr. Churchill's voice.

Our first thought was that he was being assassinated. I was first to reach the bathroom where Mr. Churchill was still roaring. I flung open the door, terrified of what I might find.

But there was the Guv'nor quite alone, with his hands

clasped to his back shouting blue murder. It was several minutes before he could tell me what had happened, and by that time there was a milling crowd outside the door.

"Norman," he said ruefully but with a grin, "as I was getting out of the bath I slipped and sat on the hot water tap."

It was very pleasant and exciting to be with my Guv'nor in Marrakesh. Next to Casablanca, it is the biggest town in Morocco. The larger part of it is very ancient and shabby. The most exciting experience that one can have in the place—and it used to make Mr. Churchill long to have the opportunity to put the scene on canvas—was to visit the fantastic Square of Death at dusk—called in Arabic Djemaa El Fna.

It is an enormous area but, because of the vast crowds who came there every evening, is invariably crammed to suffocation. Wherever there is a space free from pedestrians, pack animals and wheeled traffic, someone will have set up a small stall or else spread his wares on the ground.

Some of the goods on sale are there in very large quantities, possibly the clip of wool from the flocks of sheep owned by nomadic tribes, or else forty or fifty young goats which have just been taken protestingly from their dams. All round these big displays there are men and women with pathetically small stores of trashy goods either made by themselves, stolen, or as I often thought, picked up from some rubbish dump. The owners sit patiently and interminably cajoling the customers in their whining voices for hour after hour.

All the races of Africa seemed to me to be in the Square of Death in Marrakesh. There were enormous and semi-naked Senegalese negroes whose almost coal-black skins gleamed through the liberal covering of coconut oil; lean and tall Tuareg tribesmen with their brilliantly coloured clothes, and all sorts of half-caste and quarter-caste ranging

from almost pure white with blue English eyes to the sharp intelligent features and dark eyes of the Indian.

Not many of the thousands who cram that amazing Square ever recognised the figure of the man who used to walk freely among them, much to the misgivings of his personal detectives and the government officials. But Mr. Churchill was fascinated by the snake charmers, the story-tellers recounting for the hundredth time that week some fable which had not changed by a single word for a couple of thousand years, men and girls eating fire from flaming torches, and magicians and conjurers whose performance was better than the average one that is seen on British television or in a London music hall.

One or two traders learned to their great profit the identity of the painter with the cigar. Mr. Churchill was always watching the scene with an artist's eye. The congestion in the Square of Death and the narrow alleys leading to it was such that no one could possibly set up easel and stool and start painting.

The solution was for some shopkeeper to remove his goods displayed in the windowless front of his premises so that Mr. Churchill could sit there.

A local official would put the proposition to the shopkeeper. There would be violent protests, with much waving and a stream of wails. Then I would catch the words "Winston Churchill." Effusive smiles somewhat marred by the calculating gleam in the eyes would instantly replace the groans and growls.

The moment the matter of temporarily closing the shop came up the dealer proved that his turnover was fantastically large. Both the official and the merchant then settled down to a long bout of haggling which had to be gone through even though the fee had been settled by prolonged argument for the previous day's painting. It need hardly

be said that the owner of the shop in the right place for an easel was the envy of his neighbours.

Not all the time was spent in painting and resting. One guest with the party was F. W. D. Deakin, Warden of St. Anthony's College, Oxford, who conferred with Mr. Churchill on research for the war memoirs, at that time the main occupation of the Guv'nor, and on many days and nights work went on for hour after hour just as it did in England.

But Mr. Churchill always had time for other matters. One morning, after I had been out riding in the Atlas mountains, he asked me if I had enjoyed myself. I said " yes " but I did not really know how to ride.

Work was deferred while he gave me a lesson in his bedroom, using a chair as a saddle.

He recounted many reminiscences of his own tuition at the cavalry school at Sandhurst, in which he was enrolled in 1894 after his accident when falling from a bridge.

He told me proudly that he used to spend his leaves from Sandhurst taking extra courses in riding and military duties with the Royal Horse Guards.

He was in his youth a keen rider in point-to-points, steeplechases and of course he was a wonderful polo player when he went with his regiment to India. There was nothing about " dressage " and so on that he did not know.

Mr. Churchill returned from Morocco in fine fettle towards the end of January. Soon afterwards he made two long and now historic speeches in the House—one against the Bill to nationalise the iron and steel industry on February 7th and the second on defence on February 15th. Members learned at first hand of the invigorating benefits he had enjoyed from his holiday.

Mr. Churchill had, of course, a great love for the South of France where he has more recently spent so many weeks of the year. When he went to Nice in September, 1952, he stayed at Lord Beaverbrook's villa at Cap d'Ail, the beauti-

ful little resort on the sloping hills between Beaulieu and Monte Carlo.

Mr. Churchill was made honorary mayor of the place on this visit which was, as usual, a painting holiday. Lord Beaverbrook had a jeep with a rotating armchair behind the driver's seat. It was just as well that a sturdy vehicle of this kind was available for the roads which zig-zag from the sea's edge to the villa and thence to the amazing roads —the Grand Corniche and the Moyen Corniche—which run along the face and summit of the mountains were very steep indeed.

The jeep would take Mr. Churchill down for bathing from a private beach. He used to test the temperature of the water with a thermometer, and warm though the sea was, I doubt whether my Guv'nor, who enjoyed extremely hot baths, really liked even the slight chill of the Mediterranean.

It was at the start of this autumn holiday, incidentally, that the world had a remarkable example of the veneration with which Sir Winston is held in France.

He had agreed to visit Aix-en-Provence, one of the most ancient and lovely towns in the South of France, famous for its university and, above all, for many world famous painters, notably Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh.

His interest was in the historical buildings of the town and in the art galleries. The visit was to be a brief one and semi-private apart from an official welcome by the authorities of Aix.

But the news got around. The tree-lined streets with their moss-covered fountains were packed with people. Motor coaches brought parties from as far as Avignon, Marseilles, just to see the "Friend of France" pass by.

Guest of the King of Denmark

A NOTABLE event in 1950 was Mr. Churchill's visit to Denmark. The small nation which had brilliantly defied the Nazi occupiers of their country and helped innumerable British airmen and soldiers to escape to neutral Sweden wanted to pay their homage to the man whose voice had been their inspiration during the long years of occupation, when the conquerors ruthlessly robbed the rich Danish farm industry to feed their armies.

It was with considerable trepidation that I set off with the Guv'nor because Mr. Churchill's hosts were to be the King and Queen themselves, and we were to stay in the Royal Palace. No expert in royal etiquette, I frankly dreaded the formality and ritual I imagined would pervade the whole place.

I need not have worried. Any guest of the Danish royal family finds himself in a charming, easy-going atmosphere among the parents and their lovely daughters—Princess Margrethe, heiress to the throne, Benedikte and Anne-Marie.

All Denmark knows exactly how the royal family lives, for by His Majesty's permission the state radio organisation broadcast a programme from the Palace, with all of the royal personalities describing their day-to-day activities.

King Frederik IX of Denmark must be the most informal and friendly monarch of this or any other age. His wife, Queen Ingrid, who is of Swedish birth, has the same warm and human approach to everyone, high or low, she meets.

The palace of Amalienborg, right in the centre of Copenhagen, is comparatively small, no more than the home of an important family.

The Danes call their King "the living Danish flag." For that reason he has on occasion to behave as regally as any traditional monarch and he wears magnificent uniforms, normally his favourite one of an Admiral of the Navy.

But within his home at Amalienborg or at Christianborg Castle life is quite free from ritual and ceremony. It is most free from ceremony at their country home, a hunting lodge at Trend, in a remote part of Jutland. It is merely a large bungalow, but specially dear to the King and Queen, because it was the Danish people's wedding present.

In many ways King Frederik's routine was uncannily like that of my Guv'nor. His servants told me that the first duty was to take their master the newspapers which he reads right through, marking items of interest.

He then picks up a telephone and talks direct to his ministers, or to business men. All over Denmark people are quite accustomed to pick up a telephone when it rings and to hear the voice at the other end say:

"Good morning. I hope I am not interrupting your work, but I would be grateful if you could inform me on a point I know you have at your fingertips. This is the King speaking."

If the matter cannot be settled over the phone, he will ask for his car to be brought round and will drive himself to one of the Government offices in Copenhagen's "Whitehall."

On such occasions he is technically travelling incognito. That is to say, traffic policemen and so on will take no particular notice of him.

In fact it is almost impossible for the King to go anywhere without his people recognising him. His face is the

best known in the country, and with a height of six feet four inches he inevitably stands out in any crowd.

Like most Danes the King speaks fluent English. His interest in naval matters, on which my own wartime duties enabled me to talk with reasonable intelligence, undoubtedly made common ground for the long conversations he had with Mr. Churchill.

Born in 1899, Prince Frederik—who was baptised Christian Frederik Franz Michael Carl Valdemar Georg—learned to love the sea as quite a small boy. On the royal yacht *Dannebrog* he was made a member of the crew by the skipper and set to work.

His service number at that time was 461—and it is today the number of his favourite car in the palace garage.

By the age of eighteen he was a cadet in the Danish Navy, but no special privileges were afforded him, and it took him ten years to attain his first command—of a small torpedo boat in 1917.

Since he succeeded to the throne in 1947 King Frederik has naturally had less time for sea-going activities, but his invariable holiday routine is to take his family cruising in the royal yacht in the Baltic and around the innumerable islands off the Danish coast.

The knowledge that the Guv'nor was thoroughly enjoying himself in conversation with the King enabled me to go out quite a lot to see the sights of the beautiful city of Copenhagen. I visited the royal porcelain factory and the brewery which produces the famous lager. It is nationalised, and every glass of lager helps to build schools, hospitals, and other public services.

Perhaps a feeling of contributing to our hosts' economic well-being kept me in a cabaret in the Tivoli amusement gardens far later than I intended.

Anyway, I was not unduly worried, for Mr. Churchill was guest of honour at a state banquet that evening.

But suddenly I saw a Palace servant elbowing his way through the dancers on the crowded floor. I did not know it then, but I was about to meet a King in an unconventional and unusual manner.

All eyes turned on me as the breathless man approached my table.

"Mr. Churchill wants his soup," he said urgently. "The whole Palace is in a panic. Come quickly."

The words made me blush with shame. I had forgotten to make arrangements about a bowl of turtle soup which Mr. Churchill often insisted he must have as a nightcap. I knew he wanted it on this night—and it had to be real turtle.

As his valet it was my job to serve it to him. Over my iced lager and in the happy, hazy atmosphere of the Tivoli gardens I had forgotten all about it.

In the meantime, my Guv'nor had returned to his suite in the Palace, climbed into bed and was waiting—but not without protesting.

I leaped to my feet in the night club. I ran to the door with the palace servants pounding along behind me. The startled eyes of the Copenhageners watched us as we jumped into a waiting royal car and drove fast to the palace.

I cursed myself all the way. I was out of the car before it had stopped. Uniformed footmen flung open the Palace doors as we dashed in. I took the stairs to Mr. Churchill's room two at a time. But I was too late.

I arrived just in time to see a figure disappearing into the Guv'nor's room carrying his little bowl of soup on a silver tray.

I ran towards the figure, meaning to snatch the tray and serve the soup myself.

But an attendant stopped me and whispered: "That's the King."

Mr. and Mrs. Churchill relaxing on holiday.

Despite playful splashing of the cameras by Mr. Churchill one pressman managed to get this shot at the Lido, Venice.

Friendships which were forged in war and have flourished in peace: Mr. Churchill with General Eisenhower and Field Marshal Montgomery at an El Alamein Reunion.

The Guv'nor with the man whose patriotism and drive he relied on in two world wars—Lord Beaverbrook—driving from Nice airport to the latter's Riviera villa.

Two elder statesmen: Sir Winston Churchill and Mr. Bernard Baruch. Great friends, each regarded the other as the leading authority on world politics.

Another great friend in the land he loves and respects perhaps second only to his own: Mr. Churchill chats to President Truman during his U.S. visit.

The King of Denmark whose tattooed skin His Majesty proudly described to McGowan during Mr. Churchill's visit to Denmark.

Mr. Churchill bids goodbye to the Duke of Windsor after the latter's visit to Downing Street.

To Sir Winston the Commonwealth is a living entity. Constant personal contacts are his watchword. Here during his visit to Canada he confers with Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, United Kingdom High Commissioner; A. Adrian Roberts, High Commissioner for South Africa; and R. R. Saksena, of Pakistan.

The kitchen staff later told me that the King had heard the commotion and decided to serve the soup himself.

I dreaded what would happen in the morning. I expected a merited and severe reproof, but next morning Mr. Churchill did not say a word.

He just gave me a twinkling look, as much as to say that he was completely satisfied with the Palace service.

An hour later I was pressing a pair of Mr. Churchill's trousers when a man walked into the ante-room of the suite.

I thought he was just a servant. I had my sleeves rolled up and he could see my tattoos.

"I was in the Navy, too," said my visitor. Soon we were swapping Navy yarns like old shipmates.

After a while he said: "I have some tattoos also. Would you like to see them?"

I nodded.

He took off his jacket and rolled up his shirt sleeves. "There you are. What do you think of those?" he said proudly, pointing to a brightly coloured design of dragons and birds. "And that's not all. I have a lot more on my chest," he added as he left the room.

That afternoon I saw him again. He was beside Mr. Churchill, but he was now wearing the insignia and orders of the King.

Later I got to know His Majesty quite well. But I never discussed the soup. I thought it was better to let sleeping dogs lie!

In spite of the free and easy attitude of the King himself, all his Palace servants had to wear smart uniforms. His Majesty knew that dignity and spectacle around him were necessary and correct as Head of State.

The King's own valet looked splendid in his magnificent outfit. I mentioned it to Mr. Churchill—for I just wore an ordinary suit.

His only comment was: "Never mind, Norman. After this visit you'll probably get a medal."

The visit to Copenhagen was, by the way, a typical example of the hectic time that an official visit of this kind involves. In the press it often appears that there is only one function apart from the welcome and farewell, these being the newsworthy features.

In reality events are dovetailed to fill almost every hour. My diary of the Copenhagen visit shows that we took off from Northolt airport at lunch-time on Monday, October 9. We touched down at Kastrup airport at 3.45 p.m.

While I was driven straight to the Palace to prepare my Guv'nor's suite, Mr. and Mrs. Churchill went to the City Hall Square, where thousands had assembled to greet him.

For three-quarters of an hour leaders of the Danish Underground were introduced; the Lord Mayor made a speech of welcome and Frode Jakobsen, leader of the Underground Movement in the war, presented Mr. Churchill with the badge awarded to members who had served in it or helped its activities. Five minutes for a few words of thanks from Mr. Churchill and the cars left for the Palace.

The Guv'nor had slept in the plane so the two hours before the dinner given by the King and Queen were spent in checking over his speech, bathing and getting dressed.

The next morning involved private conversation with the King and luncheon at the Palace. In the afternoon came a visit to the university, the conferring of the honorary degree of Ph.D., more speeches, and a reception. By just after 4.30 p.m. I was seeing my master to bed for a rest at the British Embassy.

There was no time to return to the Palace to change so I brought his clothes over there in readiness for dinner at Christianborg Castle when the Danish Government were the hosts. It was very late when he got back to the suite

in the King's Palace and I was missing when it was time for his soup!

The next morning was spent much as it was at Chartwell. But there was a formal luncheon and then the official goodbye to the Royal hosts.

A reception at the British Embassy at 5 p.m. was followed by a rest and dining informally there, though the American and Norwegian Ambassadors were guests. Then out to a crowded meeting organised by students and Anglo-Danish organisations. There were five thousand people in the hall and we listened to an address by Mr. Churchill on United Europe.

It was again very late that he got to bed, but we had to be up early for the plane was due to leave at 10, and although the visit had officially finished the previous day there were huge crowds on the road between the Embassy and the airport, and dozens of people who expected a few friendly words. They got them, of course.

By lunchtime on Thursday we were back at Northolt. The only person not fagged out was the Guv'nor. He seemed to thrive on this sort of thing.

Friendships

FRIENDSHIP is not given lightly by Sir Winston Churchill. He has, from my observations, little enthusiasm for superficial acquaintances. Guests in such an important household were naturally numerous and varied, and he played the host perfectly and found stimulation in talking to them.

But he had no time for the transparent and time-wasting pleasantries which such social occasions can mean. Often guests would not see him until long after they had arrived, and even the temptations of after-dinner conversation, which he loved, did not always prevent him from excusing himself and retiring to his study.

Always one had the feeling that Mr. Churchill was nagged by a sense of "so much to do and so little time to do it."

Somehow one also felt that he was fearful of loneliness. It was perhaps this dread that made him so happy always to have his family around him, even though once they were there he might stalk off to work on his memoirs.

Perhaps he has never completely got over the loneliness of his childhood.

"My mother made a brilliant impression upon my childhood life. She shone for me like the evening star—I loved her dearly, but at a distance."

"All my dreams of comradeship with him [his father, Lord Randolph Churchill], of entering Parliament at his side, and in his support, were ended. There remained for me only to pursue his aims and vindicate his memory."

These two comments on his mother and father which he

has set down are clues to his early yearning for love and companionship which circumstances prevented him having.

If he did not bestow friendship lightly, once it was given nothing could spoil it. It was given only when very high standards of honour, duty and intellectual power were passed. As, for example, in the life and outlook of King George VI.

My Guv'nor had a very great affection and high regard for the King. From the way he spoke about him, it was more than the loyalty of a Minister to his Monarch, strong as that was.

Perhaps more than anyone else, except the Queen, Mr. Churchill knew the real state of His Majesty's health, and how he was fighting with all his will power to make his ailing body carry on.

It was characteristic of my Guv'nor's consideration for other people that he suggested to the King during His Majesty's convalescence after he had an operation, that the traditional evening audience should be changed to the afternoon. This was agreed to late in 1951.

Only very rarely have I seen my Guv'nor so upset that he was at a complete loss for words. One occasion was early on a January morning in 1952 when the news came through that King George VI had died in his sleep at Sandringham.

The tears welled up into his eyes, and he got out of bed to go and tell Mrs. Churchill.

There was, of course, much for him to do in his official capacity on the death of the Sovereign and the immediate accession of the Queen, but for some time he seemed numbed by the news.

My Guv'nor had a great love for the King's brother, the Duke of Windsor. They spent a long time together when Mr. Churchill visited New York in January, 1951.

There were many reasons for this friendship. The two men had known one another well for many years. Mr. Churchill had proclaimed him Prince of Wales during his tenure of office as Home Secretary. He had the loyalty to his King—and no one is more unswerving in his fidelity to the Throne than Mr. Churchill. Above all, there was the loyalty to a friend.

As his old comrade in the political arena, Lord Birkenhead once said about him, " He never failed a friend no matter how embarrassing the obligation appeared at the time."

In his loyalty to Edward VIII, his friendliness to Mrs. Simpson, and his vigorous denunciation of moves regarding abdication, Mr. Churchill virtually risked his political career. That did not matter; a friend needed help . . .

Of his regard for the present Queen there is little need to write. As in the case of her father, it is more than dutiful affection of a subject for his Sovereign. Her very name arouses all his romantic dreams of a great country ruled by a great Elizabeth.

The man whose arrival always seemed to light up my Guv'nor's face with more pleasure than any other of the scores of important visitors which we had day after day while we were at Downing Street or Hyde Park Gate was Mr. Anthony Eden.

When he mentioned that his Foreign Minister would be coming he quite often gave me some account of the years gone by which concerned a comment or activity of Mr. Eden's. He never forgot how both of them had been in the political wilderness just before the outbreak of the Second World War, and how Mr. Eden, a much younger man, with his life before him, had virtually abandoned a career in politics which had taken him to the very top, simply on a matter of principle and honour.

I think Mr. Churchill enjoyed recalling those dark days

of their friendship quite as much as the days after 1940 when these two men, though so different in character, seemed to understand one another so perfectly. I think also that my Guv'nor had tremendous satisfaction in seeing this friendship made even stronger in 1952 by bringing Mr. Anthony Eden into the family as it were, on the occasion of his marriage to Clarissa, Mr. Churchill's relative.

My Guv'nor has, as is well known, a close and long friendship and work co-operation with Lord Beaverbrook. The two men admire one another, but there were times when the way they both sparred would have given an outsider the quite erroneous impression that they disliked one another.

Lord Beaverbrook, a very devout man and a rigid self-disciplinarian, was always being teased by my Guv'nor, who took a tolerant and easy-going attitude towards matters spirtual, and was constantly boasting that he had eaten and drunk more or less what he liked for all his life.

I remember on one occasion, Lord Beaverbrook came to us after a bad attack of gout. At the end of dinner, Stilton cheese and port were served, and Mr. Churchill said: "Come on, Max, have some wine. Port is the brother of cheese."

"Yes," Lord Beaverbrook replied, "and the sister of gout."

One of the penalties of age is the loss of friends through death. I realised this from the mementoes and reminiscences of men who had been my Guv'nor's friends and colleagues, but were no more.

The death, for example of his old and close friend, Field Marshal Jan Christiaan Smuts, although it was not unexpected, affected him deeply.

"In every way he seemed to be one of the most, enlightened, courageous and noble-minded men that we

have known in these fifty years of the twentieth century," Mr. Churchill said in his speech in the House of Commons after the Field Marshal's death.

Smuts was one of the friends to whom Mr. Churchill would listen more often than talk. He had the role of counsellor.

One reason for this friendship of more than forty years' perfect understanding was that both were Empire men. They believed in something very different from a conquering nation owning a remote colony.

In the Boer War they had been enemies, but enemies with a chivalrous regard for one another. Together they had settled a quarrel and gone forward in partnership, exerting profound influence to do the same. The two men saw, long before the idea of a Commonwealth of sister nations was a normal conception, that the strength of the British Empire lay in each country being able to settle its differences on equal terms—and not as victor and vanquished.

I recall that one of the research experts working on Mr. Churchill's material saying to me when Smuts's death was announced: "You know, McGowan, your master's friendship with General Smuts and his superior General Botha probably shortened the first world war by months. Solely on account of that friendship these two Boers, to the world's surprise, instantly declared war on Germany and attacked German South West Africa in 1914. If they had remained neutral or gone on the other side, Germany might have won the U-boat war. She would certainly have deferred her defeat well into 1919."

Men with this conception of sister nations under the Crown were always to be favoured with the Guv'nor's friendship. Some of them were to the left of Sir Winston's own political beliefs, with the result that there were arguments—but no severance of the friendship.

Mr. (now Sir) Robert Boothby was, I think, Mr. Churchill's great friend in Parliament outside his Ministerial colleagues.

Not that they always agreed. Their friendship thrived on argument, but there was the streak of similarity of character which made the younger man a reflection of the older. Mr. Boothby had gained my Guv'nor's respect as a fighter. As the baby of the House of Commons in the mid-twenties he had written Mr. Churchill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what was a highly critical letter about the Conservatives' treatment of the Scottish miners.

It was the sort of letter that might have registered a black mark against a very junior M.P. for the rest of his career. But Mr. Churchill's reaction was to offer Mr. Boothby the post as his Parliamentary private secretary. No doubt he remembered when he was himself a callow and presumptuous young man daring to criticize the greybeards of the Cabinet.

I should mention one other M.P. who enjoyed a close friendship with Sir Winston—Mr. Brendan Bracken (now Lord Bracken). Mr. Brendan Bracken had a gaiety which aroused the wit and humour of the Guv'nor—the more so because Mr. Brendan Bracken used his light touch in conversation to embellish down-to-earth and commonsense comments which stripped matters to their real essentials.

This friendship was close enough to make Mr. Bracken welcome to family gatherings. He was in the private circle insofar as he was godfather to the Guv'nor's grandson, Winston.

In the same class of close intimacy was " Prof," as the Guv'nor called Professor Frederick Lindemann,, holder of the Chair of Experimental Philosophy at Oxford University (later Lord Cherwell). Probably there was no one

else living whose opinion carried such weight with the Guv'nor.

The two men used to talk together until the early hours of the morning in the period before Mr. Churchill again became Prime Minister and told his colleagues that he wanted "Prof" in the Cabinet with special responsibility on atomic energy.

No one else whom I saw in my master's company could make him a silent listener for such long periods. With most of his friends, discussion did tend to become a Churchill monologue, but with "Prof" explaining things he was content to listen. This was all the more remarkable for science usually bored him and he wanted to know as little as possible about it.

This friendship had existed long before the "Prof" became the "back-room boy" of Mr. Churchill's war strategy. It became close in the summer of 1932 when the two men toured Holland, Belgium, Germany and Austria as part of Mr. Churchill's research on the military campaigns of Marlborough, whose momentous life he was then writing.

The two men saw throughout Germany the hysterical fervour of the people for Hitler. Before that working holiday was over Mr. Churchill was demanding research by his beloved "Prof" not on eighteenth century military history, but on the potential armaments of science for the war he feared was almost inevitable.

For the Socialists in the post-war Governments my Guv'nor never had the embittered hatred of many Conservatives. Mr. Attlee he respected, but I think he found him a somewhat colourless personality.

Mr. Herbert Morrison had in the war gained his admiration as the symbol of London's abililty "to take it," being the minister largely responsible for the air raid precautions in the capital and later of the nation-wide organisa-

tion. But by 1950 I think that the admiration had been clouded by some kind of resentment. Mr. Morrison was no longer a favoured adversary.

Without any doubt, if his remarks are an accurate gauge of his real feelings, the Socialist he admired and, I would suggest loved, was Ernest Bevin.

"I feel bound to put on record that he takes his place among the great Foreign Secretaries of our country" was his public profession of this regard when he broadcast after Mr. Bevin's death in 1951.

He admired Bevin's robust language, his unaffected aitch dropping and habit of using the word "bloody" no matter how formal the occasion or how illustrious the audience. When writing of his tussles in the war cabinet with Mr. Bevin, then conscripting the nation for war work and fighting tenaciously for the rights of the workers while never forgetting for a moment that national need, my Guv'nor used to smile in appreciation of the memory of a man who was in character very like him.

Even Mr. Churchill's bitterest critics on the Socialist benches could rely on his regard and respect if their opinions were honest and given without personal spite. And, of course, there had to be patriotism, however divergent the means to that end.

Even Mr. Emanuel Shinwell, who was never in the War Cabinet and often lashed my Guv'nor with his sharp tongue both during and after the war could rely on this regard.

I have seen the two men talking in the corridors of the House at a time when minor Tories were looking the other way as Mr. Shinwell approached, and they were quite mystified when Mr. Churchill intervened in a very heated debate to say about him:

"I should not like the speech of the late Minister of Defence to go without its due and proper acknowledg-

ment from this side of the House. We have our party battles and bitterness, and the great balance of the nation is maintained to some extent by our quarrels, but I have always felt and testified, even in moments of party strife, to the Rt. Hon. Gentleman's sterling patriotism and to the fact that his heart is in the right place where the life and strength of our country were concerned."

" How high this man can rise above the midget stature of his colleagues," as Mr. Shinwell has remarked about this compliment.

It should not be thought that there was a " sameness " about the people my Guv'nor welcomed to his home.

Looking over my diary for part of 1951 the variety of people who came indicates how he liked to keep in touch with the world and all its activities. All the names suggest some interesting facet of human endeavour.

Miss Margaret Truman to luncheon; Mr. Lou Douglas for a talk; C. S. Forester there all day; General Sarnoff at a small family gathering. General Eisenhower and Lord Ismay for a conference ; Henry Ford III to luncheon ; the Rt. Hon. George Strauss to dinner.

Day after day there is always some famous name . . .

Others came from the world of entertainment, Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh were quite regular guests and another possibly unexpected friend of the Guv'nor was Freddie Mills, the boxer.

I do not think it was Mr. Mills' boxing as such that interested my Guv'nor. There must have been a dozen prize fighters who would have leapt at the chance of visiting Chartwell, but Mr. Mills was welcome because he had a real sense of humour and was so essentially a natural person that he was never intimidated into artificial obsequiousness in the presence of the Great Man.

Once we went to Paddington station to take the train to Plymouth, where my Guv'nor was to make a speech

and meet the civic dignitaries. All sorts of officials and quite a considerable crowd of the public must have been mystified when my Guv'nor and his party, making their way along a clear platform to the train when, on the adjacent one stood Freddie Mills grinning and pointing to two missing teeth in his mouth. He had a fight the night before and they had been knocked out.

Mr. Churchill had read about that fight and made violent signals of amusement to his friend on the other platform, rather to the horror, I fear, of some of the stilted gentlemen on the staff of British Railways and in the political cavalcade which was going with us to Plymouth. They rather disapproved of this sort of badinage between a boxer and my Guv'nor.

Not even his bitterest enemy could call Sir Winston a snob . . . .

Inside Number Ten

To a sightseer walking along Downing Street the house numbered 10 must seem remarkably small for the official residence of the Prime Minister, his personal staff and family, as well as serving as the nerve centre of government.

When I was told that we should shortly be moving from Hyde Park Gate, and visits to Chartwell would be rarities during the time that Parliament was sitting, I must admit that I wondered how on earth we should manage in the rooms behind that door with its narrow frontage.

In fact No. 10 must be almost the biggest dwelling-house in Central London. I never counted all the rooms because there were some parts into which I was not permitted to go, but I know that there are more than sixty.

There are four floors as well as a semi-basement, and on the ground and first floors the rooms are high and spacious.

Life in No. 10 for the domestic and official staff of a Prime Minister is quite intricate, because both the domestic and Ministerial activities tend to get inextricably mixed up.

I myself have stood aside with one of my Guv'nor's suits over my arm which I was taking to the cleaners, because two or three Ministers were arriving for a Cabinet Meeting.

Typists running along with some recently completed memoranda are quite liable to collide with a maid taking a tea tray to the drawing room, and one is never quite

certain whether the dusting of some part of the house is really the responsibility of the "dailies" sent by the Ministry of Works, or falls to the duty of one of the personal servants.

Let me try to describe what it is like behind that heavy door with its old-fashioned knocker made in the shape of a lion's head, with the highly polished brass name plate below, which announces, not that this is the residence of the Prime Minister, but of the First Lord of the Treasury.

Many and many a time, when I have been passing to or from the servants' entrance during the summer season, when scores of foreign tourists are always coming into Downing Street and just staring at the door, I have been asked where Mr. Churchill lived.

On pointing to the door, there was usually a protest: "But it says the First Lord of the Treasury's house. Who is he?"

I used to explain that the Prime Minister was automatically in this office as well, and because many of my questioners, notably the Americans, always like to get their facts confirmed, I took the trouble to look up the history of the place, and found that it was back in 1735 that No. 10 was first used as an official residence, and at that time the monarch's Chief Minister was not known as the Prime Minister but as the First Lord of the Treasury.

The Americans seemed to like this explanation, for it tallied with their entirely justified idea that Britain lives on her traditions, and that once a custom has been started, it takes more than a few wars and a couple of centuries to change it.

Assuming that the door has been opened, and the visitor has decided not to make use of the iron foot scrapers which still remain there from the days when

Whitehall and the Horse Guards Parade were liable to be very muddy in winter time, he will enter a rather splendid hall with a floor of marble.

The visitor on official business will doubtless be conducted to one of the two rooms which adjoin the Cabinet Room.

The first on the corner consists of the secretaries' offices, from which there is a communicating door into the Private Secretary's office. If the visitor is important, perhaps a member of the Government, he may go straight to the Cabinet Room, which adjoins the Private Secretary's office.

In this case, he will go down a rather gloomy corridor which in itself is a history of Great Britain in recent times. On the walls in time sequence are photographs of Cabinets of the past.

The Cabinet Room itself can only be entered through double doors, with a gap in between them so that no servant or secretary can possibly hear the discussion going on inside.

Like all the rooms on this floor, the Cabinet Room is very spacious, and would easily take four living rooms in the typical modern house and leave some space to spare.

There is a fine old marble fireplace, built for the days when 1 cwt. of coal every time the fire was replenished was perfectly normal.

Opposite it are great windows which overlook the extremely pleasant garden of 10 Downing Street. But there is no likelihood of anyone even if they managed to get into the nearby property through the Horse Guards Parade and making use of a camera with telephoto lens or of field glasses, recording anything, because the garden is almost overgrown with decorative trees. The almonds are a magnificent sight in early spring, and a week or two afterwards the laburnums look almost as well.

The room is almost one third filled by the magnificent oblong table with seating accommodation for the largest possible Cabinet and still room for a few experts who may have been invited to give their views. The chairs are not particularly comfortable, except the one at the top for the Prime Minister, which is an arm chair.

Only a few moments before the Cabinet meeting takes place this table is always covered with a green cloth, and it is something of a feat for the staff which have the responsibility of preparing the room for the meeting, to gauge to a nicety when to remove it.

It would be a serious break with tradition if it were taken off too soon and the Prime Minister, entering the room unofficially as it were, to find the table uncovered. But, at the same time, it must, of course, be ready for the conference even if some of the members of the Cabinet happen to arrive early.

Along the wall opposite the window, and covering it on each side of the fireplace, are bookshelves which are almost completely filled with hundreds of volumes of Hansard.

Behind the Prime Minister's chair on the wall—it is a rather depressing cream colour, for the Ministry of Works only repaint and redecorate every third year, just as they do in the case of other public buildings under their care—there is a solitary painting of the first Lord of the Treasury to live at No. 10 Downing Street, Sir Robert Walpole.

There is one telephone in this room, green in colour, and a reminder to many service men in the war who must have seen this instrument in Intelligence sections, its colour betokening that it is fitted with a scrambling device so that it cannot possibly be tapped.

Through this telephone there are direct lines to Buckingham Palace, the House of Commons, the Ministries in

Whitehall, and to certain other places of major political and military importance to the nation.

The other rooms of note on this floor, which are at the far end of the house and lie at a right-angled corner in relation to the Cabinet Room, are the housekeeper's office, the kitchen, and a general office where clerical work for both the personal activities and the official business of the Prime Minister are undertaken.

There is also a small waiting room with a chair and table which is used as a studio when the Prime Minister talks to the nation direct from Downing Street.

Directly above these rooms, on the first floor, is a dining room at the far end, and next to it, a smaller room which is usually known as the breakfast room, although in my time I do not ever recall it being used for this purpose.

Then come the three rooms corresponding to the Secretaries' offices and the Cabinet Room below.

First, there is a really magnificent drawing room, which is fundamentally in the style of a couple of centuries ago, and is, of course, largely furnished to the personal taste of whatever Prime Minister is living in Downing Street. Because this room is so large, it is used only on rather formal occasions; perhaps when a new Cabinet is formed, and the Prime Minister and his wife want to get to know the Ministers and their wives on a social basis.

Adjoining this room is a room called the small drawing room, although "small" is rather a misnomer, for this again is a very spacious room with a splendid view over the garden.

Finally, directly over the Cabinet Room is what in official terms is called the boudoir. Beyond this, in a sort of annexe, and going up to the second floor as well, come the Chancellor's drawing room, his office, and the Chief Whip's office. These are, of course, really part of No. 11.

On the two floors above the private apartments are the bedrooms and servants' quarters—and the bathrooms.

Incidentally, it is rather surprising to know that only forty years ago was the first bathroom installed. Succeeding Prime Ministers can thank Mrs. Lloyd George for this, because she refused to live there until one had been put in.

Under Mrs. Churchill's expert control, No. 10 became a place that ran as smoothly and as comfortably as Chartwell Manor and Hyde Park Gate, but no one can really call it a comfortable home, and I doubt whether any leading Minister of any country, large or small, has to put up with conditions which are really hopelessly old-fashioned.

No. 10 was built along with other houses in the street during the reign of Charles II by a merchant, Sir George Downing, who made a considerable fortune with the Massachusetts Bay Company.

He came back to England in order to help Oliver Cromwell, but eventually went over to the side of the exiled Charles II ,and as a result was given a lease at the Restoration on the ground near Whitehall Palace, where he built his house. The lease was for ninety-nine years, and at the end of it, both the land and the property on it reverted to the Crown.

Only Nos. 10, 11 and 12 Downing Street still stand, and I always had sympathy with some of the servants and with the workmen from the Ministry of Works who said that it was rather a pity that they hadn't been pulled down long ago with the rest.

Undoubtedly they would have been, except for the fact that George II gave No. 10 to Sir Robert Walpole in gratitude for his services to the country, and Walpole made the gift into a permanent home for Prime Ministers.

Perhaps the house, like the brass plate with the misleading description on it, is now so redolent with tradi-

tion that its place in Britain's history more than makes up for any of the discomforts for the staff and the expense for the tenant—it is not generally known that the Prime Minister has himself to pay for all official hospitality as well as the wages of the domestic staff.

My most vivid memory of No. 10 Downing Street is not of famous visitors being entertained in the drawing room, nor of momentous Cabinet meetings, but of my Guv'nor sitting brooding alone for hours on end in the Cabinet room. Sometimes, when it was 2 or 3 a.m. I would try to hint that it was bedtime and take his soup to him. Rufus would be hard at my heels, knowing my journey downstairs would mean a greeting from his master.

My Guv'nor would tear himself from the problems with which he was wrestling, thank me for the beverage, and stoop down to fondle the dog.

"You know, Rufus," he would say gently, "you're not a member of the Cabinet nor of the civil service, so by what right do you come into the Cabinet room?"

Rufus would wag his tail and lick his master's hand excitedly.

"Take him for a walk in the garden, Norman," I would be told.

Through the uncurtained windows, while the dog nuzzled in the leaves and undergrowth, I would glimpse my Guv'nor, back in the chair, his broad, massive shoulders and his head as still as a statue.

One had the impression that he was almost physically supporting a nation and a Commonwealth as he sat there. As, indeed, at that time he was.

In Canada and the U.S.A.

CHRISTMAS, 1951, was spent at Chequers. There was only a brief holiday for preparations were going ahead for a visit to the United States and Canada—part of the Guv'nor's campaign to get well in the saddle once more and to put Britain's prestige back where it should be in international affairs.

A visit of this nature is quite a formidable undertaking to arrange. The travel arrangements—in this case by the *Queen Mary* to New York and by BOAC Stratocruiser from Montreal to London (eventually we came back by sea and not by air)—are handled by a sort of Government Cooks office, known as the Conference and Supply Department of the Foreign Office.

The internal travel within the United States and across the border to Ottawa was the responsibility of the British Embassy in Washington, and the office of the High Commissioner in Canada.

When the Guv'nor travelled there was little or no class distinction. Just as on train journeys in Britain secretaries, officials and people like myself had the same comfortable first class accommodation as Mr. Churchill so on the *Queen Mary* there was no question of the lesser lights being thrust away in some distant part of the ship as Tourist Class passengers.

This, I think, must have upset some of the Foreign Office officials who had a nice civil service sense of the appropriate standard of luxury according to grade.

Anyway, on the *Queen Mary* accommodation was re-

served in a large central block on the main deck—three rooms for the Prime Minister, two for the Foreign Secretary and single cabins with a communicating sitting room for the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations and the Paymaster General.

The staff were mostly in nearby first class rooms, and some in cabin accommodation which gave immediate access to the central block. We took over almost all the luxury accommodation of this great ship.

Mr. Churchill had at the time of this visit been Prime Minister for a little over two months and there was of course a fantastic amount of work to be done by him. One cabin was set aside as an office and next to it was another turned into a cypher room to deal with the stream of coded messages coming through special arrangements both with Washington and London.

In effect the seat of Government—Parliament was in recess—was in the *Queen Mary,* and so three detectives of the Special Branch, organised by Inspector Cyril Davies, maintained constant watch on the cabin used as a general office where all secret documents were kept.

The party was very numerous. Apart from Mr. Churchill and his three Ministerial colleagues, Lord Moran went as medical adviser—fortunately as Mr. Churchill caught a bad cold during the visit.

Then there were the C.I.G.S., the First Sea Lord, Lt. General Sir Kenneth McLean, Sir Roger Makins, Sir Leslie Rowan among the advisers, Sir Norman Brook of the Cabinet Office heading the six members of the secretariat, four girls from the Prime Minister's office, five from the Foreign Office, two from the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Treasury and five men, including the detectives and myself.

On the first night out from Southampton the wintry

seas were quite rough, and some time after midnight Mr. Churchill rang for me.

"Norman," he grumbled, "I can't sleep. There is a squeak behind that panel."

I listened carefully around the wall dividing the suite into two rooms. There was only the normal creaking one hears in any ship in rough weather.

I tried to explain that the sound was inevitable, but Mr. Churchill cut me short.

"Please get it fixed," he ordered, "while I wait in my sitting room."

I felt something of a fool when I got the steward to waken the ship's engineers and carpenters.

"You've got to stop the creaking in the bedroom," I said. "Mr. Churchill can't sleep."

They looked at me in amazement. After some argument they put some packing behind the panels. I was not happy about it for I could still hear the squeaks faintly.

When Mr. Churchill came back he listened for a while and then said, "Well done, Norman. It's gone!"

I had by this time learned the value of discreet silence on some occasions.

We were at sea for the New Year, and the Guv'nor, despite all the work he was tackling, arranged a New Year party for his colleagues.

He made a point of asking me to attend—but forgetfully I got talking with some of the ship's officers about war-time experiences.

We were having a wonderful time until the ship's loud-speakers blared out:

"Will Norman McGowan report to Mr. Churchill's suite immediately."

"As I hurried along the gaily-lit "M" deck I saw a crowd around the Guv'nor's door. I thought he had been

hurt or taken ill. But as I reached the suite I saw they were Mr. Churchill's colleagues.

In uniform or evening dress, they had formed themselves into a long line. Field Marshal Sir William Slim was there, along with Lord Moran and many others.

They looked at me with considerable disfavour.

I soon found out why.

One of Mr. Churchill's secretaries hurried forward and grabbed my arm, and said: "Thank goodness you have arrived at last! Mr. Churchill has refused to start his party until he has wished you a Happy New Year."

I went into the state-room. The Guv'nor was alone. He shook my hand.

"Happy New Year, Norman," he said, and I thought I detected the ghost of a wink.

Having greeted me, he announced that the real reception could commence.

At New York Mr. Truman sent his personal aircraft for the flight to Washington. We were off in a matter of hours after leaving the pier where the *Queen Mary* berthed.

Despite the seriousness of the visit, the Guv'nor never lost his sense of humour during those days in Washington.

I remember Sir Oliver Franks, the British Ambassador, blushing in the Embassy one night.

I was taking the Guv'nor down to dinner in the lift, which always stopped below the level of the floor. I tried to put it right by pressing the emergency stop button. But I pressed it too early and we got stuck between floors.

The next night, as we stepped into the lift with Sir Oliver, Mr. Churchill knocked my hand away from the controls. "I'll drive the thing tonight," he grunted.

The inevitable happened. We got stuck again. Sir Oliver took over and by pressing all sorts of buttons, got us down safely. Mr. Churchill stepped out, puffing hard

at his cigar. Then in front of everyone assembled to greet him he turned to Sir Oliver and said:

"That's an expensive lift if it needs an Ambassador to drive it."

After the long and private conferences between Mr. Truman and Mr. Churchill we left for Canada.

On 14th January the Guv'nor attended a banquet given in his honour at the Chateau Laurier, Ottawa, by the Canadian Government.

He was in fine fettle that night, reminding his audience that fifty years before he came to Ottawa to give a lecture on the Boer War—something that his audience clearly did not know about.

But I had been told of those times when he badly needed money to carry out his duties as a new and young M.P. His lecture tour in 1900 occupied a couple of months.

Mark Twain was on one occasion the chairman and prophetically introduced him to New Yorkers as "the future Prime Minister of Great Britain." Evidently Mr. Churchill had the art of making brilliant speeches even then, for the tour of America and Canada brought him £10,000, a very great sum in those days for a lecturer.

One evening we of the Churchill staff were challenged by the Canadians to an ice hockey match. As few of us had ever played hockey and not many could skate—while none had ever combined the two—it was a remarkable game.

We played on a private rink and Mr. Churchill looked in to watch for a short time. He greatly enjoyed seeing some of his dignified employees cavorting in a most undignified way.

Everywhere Mr. Churchill went the crowds besieged him, giving the V sign and calling to him. He loved the informality.

Quite a number of people managed to get very close to my Guv'nor to make some statement which no doubt they

had been practising for a long time just in case they could ever achieve this particular ambition of theirs. Invariably Mr. Churchill told policemen and other officials who began to push the person away, to desist, and he would with courtesy listen to whatever the person accosting him had to say.

In the vast majority of cases the things which were said were unctuous flattery of the kind which annoys him very much although he would always have the courtesy with a stranger to disguise the fact.

In America and Canada people had no inhibitions about speaking.

One woman who managed to corner him, the story runs, said in a treacly gushing voice:

"Doesn't it thrill you, Mr. Churchill, to know that every time you make a speech the hall is packed to overflowing?"

"It is quite flattering," Mr. Churchill replied, "but whenever I feel this way I always remember that if instead of making a political speech I was being hanged, the crowd would be twice as big."

Another Canadian anecdote which I treasure, though I unfortunately was not there to see it enacted, concerned a speech in Toronto when the public address system went wrong. It was a very large hall, and there must have been five or six thousand people in it. At first, of course, Mr. Churchill was not aware that anything was wrong, but soon people at the back began shouting out 'Can't hear," "Speak up" and so on.

Mr. Churchill took the button microphone which he was wearing in his lapel, showed the offending device to the audience by holding it high above his head, and then threw it straight on the floor where, of course, it promptly broke.

The expectant crowd then heard the full natural Churchill thunder, which was the kind of voice which he

could still use to quieten unruly audiences even in these days of microphones and amplifiers, and he said in a voice that carried to every corner of the vast auditorium:

"Since the resources of science have failed us, we shall now fall back on Mother Nature."

On 17th January the Guv'nor was in Washington to speak to Congress. The opportunity to see the United States "House of Commons" was one which I naturally did not miss.

It was wonderful to see the acclaim with which Mr. Churchill was greeted as he walked to the dais. It was perhaps all the more remarkable because relations between the two countries were somewhat strained at the time. There were differences of outlook over the Korean War, Communist China and the Naval command in the Atlantic.

Whatever the members of Congress thought about these questions their admiration for Mr. Churchill was complete. To me, knowing of the amount of work he had done on the passage to America and since then in Washington and Ottawa, the Guv'nor's strength of voice and gesture through a very long speech in which every word had to be weighed was impressive and heart-warming. I knew my Guv'nor was thoroughly enjoying himself.

Finally we returned to New York where Mr. Churchill had a few days' holiday.

One night when he was dining with his great friend the Duke of Windsor, I decided to slip out of the hotel and see New York by night. As I reached the door a secretary stopped me: "Mr. Churchill wants to see you before you go out," she said.

A few moments later Mr. Churchill left the Duke at the dining table and came out to me.

"Norman," he said, gravely, "I wanted to tell you to be careful in this New York traffic. It's very dangerous. I was knocked down here some years ago."

It was typical of my Guv'nor's consideration and his constant thought about the smallest matters which concerned the welfare of those around him.

The New York holiday enabled the Guv'nor to meet in leisurely and untroubled session his old friend Mr. Bernard Baruch.

The friendship between my Guv'nor and Mr. Baruch was founded on mutual admiration. On a dozen occasions Mr. Churchill had mentioned his American friend when some news item or incident in his day jerked his memory about a wise comment or action of Mr. Baruch in the past. And on the other side the admiration was just as strong. Mr. Baruch's beautiful apartment in New York was a veritable museum of Churchill tokens and mementoes.

The friendship began in 1917 when the U.S.A. entered the First World War. Mr. Churchill was the new Minister of Munitions and he agreed that Britain should make a hundred million pounds' worth of munitions, without profit, for the American armies.

Mr. Bernard Baruch was in charge of munitions production in the U.S.A., so that the two men corresponded. There were, of course, no radio or transatlantic phone conversations in those days, and the friendship ripened purely through the written word.

It was Mr. Baruch who saw that his nation's gratitude for those badly needed shells and guns was shown with the U.S. Distinguished Service Medal after the war—one of my Guv'nor's most treasured honours.

After the Armistice the two men met—and have done so regularly ever since. Mr. Churchill relaxed with his old friend for three days in New York.

Then it was back to London—with memories of a great event and knowledge at first hand just how deeply the New World loves the man who has many a time reminded them that his mother was American.

At Hyde Park Gate

My Guv'nor is a man who likes to put down roots to make the place where he dwells a real home. His great love of a place of residence—perhaps his only love—is Chartwell.

On all sorts of occasions, often when appointments or inclement weather made it highly inconvenient for himself as well as for the staff, he would say: "We're going home tomorrow."

Wherever we were when he said this no one needed to doubt where home was. It meant the place which had been a haven in good times and bad in the countryside of Kent that he loved so much.

It was no formal courtesy to his neighbours that influenced him to accept honorary membership for life of the Association of the Men of Kent and Kentish Men; he regarded Kent as his own county, by right of habitation, second only to Oxfordshire, in which he had been born.

It was this love of the county in which his home was that made him so proud of his position as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. The flag of this ancient organisation of ports and harbours always flew over Chartwell when we were there, and a miniature flag was flown on the car in which he was riding.

Hardly anyone knew what this miniature flag signified, and when we were held up in London's traffic pedestrians would often mistake it for the Royal Standard, come out into the road, and peer through the windows of the vehicle.

"No, it isn't," they would say to their friends farther

back, as if to report that there was no royalty inside. "It's old Winnie."

Immediately, the unwillingness of an English crowd to trespass on royalty's privacy would disappear. They would mob the car, cheekily shouting "Hello, Winston!" and "How goes it, Winnie?" and give the V sign, which, of course, the Guv'nor returned with a broad grin.

It was always remarkable to me that most of the important politicians, business men, and foreign diplomats who were entitled to regard him as a familiar friend were so bemused by his importance that they mostly used terms of the utmost deference—"Mr. Churchill," "Sir," "Mr. Prime Minister," and so on, when speaking to him.

The man and woman in the street, however, suffered from no such repression. To them he was Winnie or Winston. Even those who shouted something rude about the Tories spoiled the effect by using the Christian name in grudging but none the less genuine friendliness.

His natural instincts and emotions influenced him to prefer Chartwell as his home. As a statesman perhaps Downing Street was a rival in his affection because of its significance.

I remember how, after the October 1951 election, he patted Rufus's head as the dog pawed at him while he sat in bed when he knew that a Conservative win was certain.

"Rufus," he murmured to the dog. "You and I are moving to No. 10 Downing Street. We're going to our official home. You'll have a lovely garden to run in."

Downing Street was nevertheless a spiritual home rather than a physical one.

I do not really think the Guv'nor liked it as a place in which to live, though he revelled in its atmosphere as a place for work.

The other residence of Britain's Prime Ministers, Chequers, he did not like. I was told by one of the servants

there that there was a general belief that the place had a "hoodoo" about it which affected Mr. Churchill more than he cared to admit during the war.

He had been there when the signal came through that all French resistance had ceased and Petain was asking for peace terms in 1940; he was there on a summer's morning in June, 1941, when the news of Hitler's attack on Russia came through.

It was a place that seemed to attract bad news.

I did not greatly care for Chequers myself. It is an admittedly beautiful Tudor mansion and is set in an estate of some seven hundred acres in some of the loveliest country of the Chilterns above Princes Risborough.

The gift of this place as a country home for the Prime Minister of the day by Lord and Lady Lee of Fareham was a wonderfully generous one, and doubtless many Prime Ministers have been grateful for a backwater in which to rest from the cares of office. But my Guv'nor loathed backwaters. He never wanted to rusticate.

The atmosphere of Chequers was heavy and overbearing. The house contains a valuable collection of relics of Oliver Cromwell—portraits and so on.

I do not think the Guv'nor cared for these around the place. Cromwell had too much of the dictator's touch about him for his liking, and this factor outweighed the virtues of the Parliamentary spirit which imbued the Protector. The Guv'nor did not like dictators...

Moreover Mr. Churchill missed his creature comforts there. The lovely gardens, with their perfect lawns and so on did not greatly appeal to him because they were not of his making.

He insisted that the house was cold—which it was—and he yearned for his thermostatically controlled warm bedroom.

When we were down there for Christmas 1951, prior to

leaving for the United States, he took a brief pleasure in the large coal fire I had up in his bedroom. He said that the flames playing on the ceiling would lull him to sleep, but soon he was complaining that the crackling disturbed him. I had to bank it down in an endeavour to stop the noise. Then, of course, the room got cold. And the trees outside rustled and creaked interminably.

There remains Hyde Park Gate.

Number twenty-eight is a modest enough dwelling, but with an old-fashioned spaciousness that makes the houses in these roads on the environs of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens so eagerly sought after by people of taste. Epstein, the sculptor, for example, was a near neighbour.

The spaciousness of the rooms, with their high ceilings and substantial decorations was, I think, one reason why Mr. Churchill felt at ease there.

Sir Winston is not the sort of man who could thrive in a modern flat, with every square foot ingeniously contrived so that living is possible in a series of boxes excused by the term " labour saving."

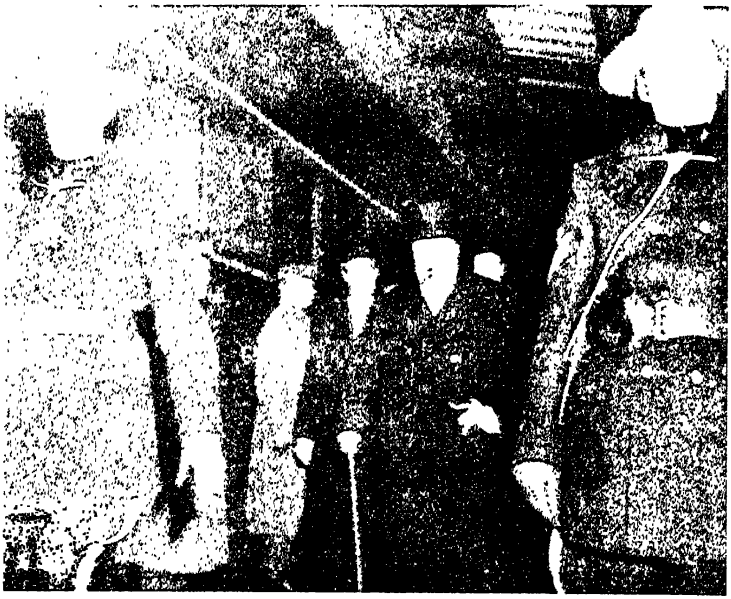
The house also had the great advantage of being close to the House of Commons. The Guv'nor's driver knew of ingenious short cuts avoiding Hyde Park Corner and going around Buckingham Palace so that, at night time, the journey took only six or seven minutes from door to door.

Curiously enough, few sightseers hung around the house to see the Guv'nor go in and out, even on days when for one reason or another he was in the news and crowds gathered in Parliament Square. It was not as if the whereabouts of the Guv'nor's London home was unknown. The address is given in all reference books and in the London telephone directory.

It was, however, a favourite place for the press photographers and some of the best pictures of him have been taken outside the front door of Number Twenty-eight.

A happy trio at a dinner in Washington when Miss Margaret Truman, singer, and Miss Sarah Churchill, actress, chat with Mr. Churchill, artist.

A charming gesture by the Danish royal family to the Guv'nor's valet: a presentation picture of the King and Queen of Denmark with their two British guests.



Canada gives the Guv'nor a truly Canadian welcome when his train arrives at Ottawa. Mounties escorting him through the cheering crowds.

The man who saw at first hand the sacrifices of the Canadian Armies in Western Europe pays tribute to their dead with Louis St. Laurent in Parliament Building, Ottawa.

The Hon. Academician Extraordinary of the Royal Academy in happy mood among notabilities and artists at the annual dinner of the R.A.

One of the comparatively few weddings Sir Winston has attended was the marriage of the Marquess of Blandford to Miss Susan Hornby in 1951. The Marquess is heir to the dukedom of Marlborough.

Receiving the freedom of Nancy, France. This was an occasion whe French diplomacy delighted and impressed Mr. Churchill after h had appeared wearing a French decoration incorrectly.

The Guv'nor's custom of suddenly deciding to wear somewhat un usual but deeply traditional uniforms from the vast array to whicl he was entitled often presented urgent problems to his valet.

There also informality made him approachable, and journalists could get a quote or two which would have been impossible anywhere else.

It was at this door that he made his oft-quoted remark to a press photographer who was there to get a birthday picture.

After the Guv'nor had obligingly posed, the pressman said:

"I hope, sir, that I will shoot your picture on your hundredth birthday."

"I don't see why not, young man," the Guv'nor replied after a brief study of the other. "You look reasonably fit and healthy."

On the other side of that door is a large hall. To one side is a library. The shelves are crammed with books, notably all the works of Macaulay, beautifully bound and engraved. On the other side is a smaller room called the morning room which in practice served as a waiting room and a meeting place. Stairs led from this to the offices, which were actually within the confines of the adjoining house, No. 27.

Here, two secretaries, for whom a flat was provided as work often went on so late that they could not have got home by public transport, shared their duties with their colleagues at Chartwell.

It was typical of the generosity and kindness of the Guv'nor, by the way, that after he moved to Downing Street and it became obvious that only comparatively rarely would I be able to get home to my family at Chartwell he suggested my wife and daughter move in to part of Number Twenty-eight so that I could be with them more frequently.

At the end of the hall, towards the rear of the house, was a small balcony beyond which were steps down to a lovely dining room. This was large enough to accom-

modate twenty guests and more at a magnificent plain oak table.

Large french windows led to the lawn and a rather overgrown garden. Rufus enjoyed it, but the Guv'nor rarely walked in it. It wasn't spacious enough for his kind of exercise.

Apart from the servants' quarters and kitchens, there remained only the Guv'nor's study, a bathroom, two bedrooms and a guest room.

The furniture in the Guv'nor's bedroom was more modern than at Chartwell, with a fitted dressing table of the type that one stands up at. In the bedroom, kept at constant temperature of 74 degrees, just as at Chartwell, there were portraits of his father and mother, an old print of the Houses of Parliament, and one of his own paintings —changed no doubt later, but while I was there a scene in the Dolomites.

A noticeable feature of Hyde Park Gate the moment one entered was the perfume. There was an incense burner on the stairs which Mrs. Churchill lit the moment we arrived—to signify, as it were, that the house was again tenanted.

The Guv'nor enjoyed the perfume of the incense. He does, as a matter of fact, like eau de cologne, which I sprayed on his handkerchiefs every morning while he dressed.

My most vivid memory of Hyde Park Gate is not of the place but of just one hour out of the time I worked for the Guv'nor.

It was late on the night of 27th October, 1951. The results had already shown that beyond all shadow of doubt the Conservatives had won.

For once there was a crowd in the road outside the house. They started calling "Winnie" so loudly that we could hear them distinctly at the rear of the house, where

I was attending the Guv'nor at a quiet family dinner party.

Mrs. Churchill was wearing two red roses on her black dress—flowers given to her by her husband to mark the special occasion.

The Guv'nor was desperately tired that evening, and he insisted that he would not accede to the crowd's calls but wanted to go to bed.

I helped him undress and began plumping up the pillow which he always hugged like a teddy bear. The shouts became louder and more insistent. Then, with Mrs. Churchill beside him and Rufus in his arms he went to the window. In his dressing gown he grinned to the people below and gave the V sign.

For some reason the enthusiasm changed easily to a sense of consideration for the elderly man on whom a heavy burden had been thrust by the will of the people. They gave one last cheer and began spontaneously to melt away.

Mr. Churchill watched them for a moment and then let the curtains fall. His wife bade him goodnight and I stepped forward to take his dressing gown as he returned to his bed.

He slumped into bed and said:

"Norman, I want a whisky and soda!"

I brought him one, and as he sipped it he said, as if speaking to himself:

"We've won, Norman. I have the reins of the country in my hands again. But we're in a bloody mess."

He paused and took another slow sip.

"I have so little time left," he finished in almost a whisper.

For the first and only time in my career I did not say goodnight as I stole from the room. Sometimes occasions are too momentous for words.

His Wit in Wisdom

To be in the Guv'nor's presence was to be highly entertained. Lord Birkenhead once rather cruelly said that his friend "had devoted the best years of his life to his impromptu speeches."

Maybe that was true at the time it was said. It may even be true now, but in his wit and humour that pervaded virtually every waking hour the words bubbled out spontaneously.

For those around him in his personal life—his family, his friends, his detectives, his servants—there was laughter in abundance. Life with the Guv'nor was never dull!

Mr. Churchill loved to continue some private joke in the presence of others who, not having the faintest idea what it was all about, would smile rather wanly and hope they were not being too obtuse.

He would adopt a perfectly serious tone, but those who knew him well might detect the sparkle in his eyes and the slightest crinkling at the corners to indicate that he was up to some harmless mischief.

If they were humourless, or so wary of the great man that they took everything very seriously, life could be trying—like the unfortunate secretary who, told by Mr. Churchill that if there were shortcomings in his work he would be sent to Rota the lion, meat being hard to get at the time, hurried off to report that his boss was in delirium.

An example of the lengths to which my Guv'nor would go to keep a private joke going—and incidentally to use gentle humour as an effective reprimand—occurred when

he went to receive the freedom of the City of Portsmouth in 1950.

Admiral Sir Arthur Power, Portsmouth's Commander-in-Chief, stepped forward as the bugles sounded for the start of the ceremony. He greeted Mr. Churchill and then stood back to allow other dignitaries to approach, but the Guv'nor called the Admiral back and said: "I want you to meet my man Norman."

We shook hands formally, but rather embarrassed.

Then with that significant twinkle in his eyes, Mr. Churchill went on: "Norman's the man who won the U-boat war." The Admiral murmured something vague and non-committal. I suppose he was fervently trying to recall some detail of Naval history for 1939-45 which recorded brilliant actions by a very young man. It was fairly obvious from my appearance that I must have been in my late teens during the war.

The Admiral was not to know that this gesture was the sequel to a current private joke between Mr. Churchill and myself. It arose when I criticised an American map of U-boat successes which hung in his bedroom. One morning as he was dressing I told him: "Those American claims are a lot of bull."

He never allowed me to forget that I, a valet, had spoken so confidently on a subject I knew nothing about. By leg-pulling the Admiral he was really teasing me.

A brief digression encouraged by this mention of the freedom of Portsmouth ceremony: putting away the mementoes of it among all the others, I started to count up the "freedoms" he had received.

They came to thirty-six, and there were more afterwards. Sir Winston is an honorary citizen of Cuba, Athens, Paris, Marathon, Thebes; of little known places like Nanpactus in Greece and Nancy in France; he holds the freedom of great cities like London, Antwerp, Brussels, Edin-

burgh, Manchester, Birmingham and smaller ones like Beckenham, Eastbourne and Perth.

"It would be easy for me to retire gracefully in an odour of civic freedom," he told his party after the war, in explaining why he did not intend to do so.

Sometimes when we motored up to London on a fine clear day, my Guv'nor would look out of the car window at the towering spire of Canterbury Cathedral, and say once more how glad he was that this beautiful building in the Kent countryside had not been destroyed in the air raids which Hitler deliberately directed against the Cathedral City.

I was told that in the early weeks of the summer of 1940, Mr. Churchill suddenly hurried away from Whitehall and down into Kent, everyone believing that he had gone there to do something about safeguarding his own home in Chartwell.

In fact he did not worry about that, but went direct to Canterbury to see that everything possible was being done to protect the Cathedral and its priceless treasures. On a number of occasions he found the time to rush down and inspect how the work was going on.

At length, when everything had been done that the Ministry of Works and local civil defence authorities could devise, Mr. Churchill reported to the Archbishop of Canterbury that no matter how often the German bombers managed to drop bombs within the danger zone around the Cathedral the actual fabric of the building and all those relics which had not been removed would be safe.

This evidently did not satisfy the Archbishop, because rather ungratefully he said to the Prime Minister: "What will happen if they score a direct hit on the Cathedral?"

Mr. Churchill, who had devoted a large amount of his

personal time to the problem and knew all the unsparing work which had been put into it by the defence authorities, rather shortly replied:

"In that case, my dear Archbishop, you will have to regard it as a divine summons."

Quite frequently Mr. Churchill used his wit to point the moral that he did not regard spiritual matters as his province.

In the spring of 1952 Mr. Gower, a Conservative M.P., put down the question:

"Will the Prime Minister assure the House that, while we have quite properly attended to the physical needs of defence and of our other problems, we should not forget these spiritual resources which have inspired this country in the past and without which the noblest civilization would decay?"

Mr. Churchill answered: "I hardly think that that is my exclusive responsibility."

On occasion the Guv'nor's sense of fun was very boyish. The first time I went to Mr. Churchill's chambers at the House of Commons, he told me to prepare his bed, and then watched grinning while I tried to find it. It was the type that fitted into the wall. The same thing happened when I tried to find the bathroom; the door fitted flush with the panels.

It was the sort of thing that is apt to infuriate the victim if carried on too long. Mr. Churchill liked to keep the joke going to the last possible moment.

He quite enjoyed catching me out, and usually it became a tussle as to who would give way first, for he would not reprimand me once he had pretended to be misled, though taking good care that the pretence was contrived.

When at Strasbourg for a meeting of the Council of Europe, Mr. Churchill always obtained me a ticket to go to the Assembly. I had, of course, heard him preparing

the speech he was to make, and invariably I used to go off to town sightseeing.

He knew this perfectly well, but on his return he would comment: "I thought it went rather well, didn't you?"

I would reply: "Yes, sir, very well indeed."

Then, with a vestige of a grin, he would stare at me, while I dreaded some question that would catch me out. It never came; he tempered his strength of attack according to his adversary.

Mr. Churchill had a tremendous sense of dignity on the appropriate occasion, but he had no time whatsoever for false pomposity. I remember a story concerning an occasion when he was giving a press interview to American journalists who were asking the usual rather fatuous questions which come after the major queries have been dealt with.

"Would you like to tell our readers, sir," one journalist asked, "what are the desirable qualifications for any young man who wishes to become a politician?"

Mr. Churchill put on his best bulldog look and everybody rather fancied that he was going to make a profound statement which might indicate that he took the question very seriously.

But there was the characteristic twinkle in his eye as he rumbled on very thoughtfully:

"It is the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month and next year."

He paused and looked round the room to make certain that all the journalists had put this down, then he added: "And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn't happen."

There was a somewhat similar example of bringing things down to earth when an ardent American feminist demanded from him a world-shaking statement of his views about sex equality.

"What," she asked, "should the role of Woman be in the future?"

Mr. Churchill pondered on the question for a moment or two.

"The same, I trust, as it has been since the days of Adam and Eve," he said.

I have already mentioned the great mutual affection and admiration which existed between my Guv'nor and his son. Their sense of humour was very similar, so each appreciated the other's wit.

The Guv'nor used to enjoy having recounted to him some anecdote of Mr. Randolph Churchill's activities or repartee especially when, as they were at times, approaching an original Churchillian observation.

One that particularly delighted him because of his joy in gentle teasing of his great friend, Lord Beaverbrook, may not have been true. I do not really know. Anyway, the story concerns the servants at Lord Beaverbrook's London home.

Apparently it was their custom to refer to their master not as Lord Beaverbrook or His Lordship, but as "The Lord."

Mr. Randolph Churchill one day called to see him and was told by a manservant who opened the door: "I am sorry, sir, The Lord is out in the Park."

"Ah," Mr. Randolph replied. "Walking on the lake, I presume?"

Enjoyment of the wit of others in this way was rather unusual. He preferred to be the leading character in the story even if it meant the heat and hurly burly of an argument.

Many of my friends on days when the newspapers reported "Uproar in the House" with Sir Winston Churchill in the thick of it have insisted that it was a

shame that such an old and distinguished man was treated so hardly by his opponents.

I have always told them that my old Guv'nor needed no pity. He was well able to look after himself, and, in fact, that the greatest insult would be for the Opposition to ignore him.

"I can assure the Right Hon. Gentleman," he said in the House in 1952 as a retort to Mr. Herbert Morrison, "that the spectacle of a number of middle-aged gentlemen who are my political opponents being in a state of uproar and fury is really quite exhilarating to me."

Exhilarating the cut and thrust of the debate certainly was. It produced, as always, the barbed shafts of his peerless wit, and I have watched while what were really cruel and unjusified insults caused him to grin happily—with his thoughts of the repartee forming in his mind that would bring cheers and laughter from both sides.

Sir Winston Churchill's deafness, which is not very severe for he can hear perfectly well without a hearing-aid during all normal conversation in a reasonably quiet room, was sometimes used by him to his own advantage.

In the House of Commons, plenty of Members of Parliament know that he can infuriate an opponent who was talking long and loud but to little effect by fiddling with the controls and pretending that he could not hear.

I recall an example of the Guv'nor's effective use of his alleged deafness in this way.

It was in February, 1952, during a bitter debate on foreign policy that Mr. Aneurin Bevan made a speech in criticism of U.S.-British diplomatic activities in the Far East. Nettled by the Prime Minister's inattention he paused and complained.

"I apologise to the Right Hon. Gentleman," said the Prime Minister blandly. "I'm afraid I did not hear what

he said. I am sorry to have missed it. Would he mind repeating it?"

"It was not a good enough joke to repeat," Mr. Bevan replied angrily.

The fact that a hearing aid made life easier for him in a way rather annoyed him. He had no interest in machines and no love for gadgets and hated to be dependent on them. He was always insinuating that through the deliberate perversity of all machinery the thing had gone wrong once more.

In regard to this dislike of scientific devices I remember a well meaning and generous American admirer persuading him to have a magnificent dictating machine installed in his study.

It was an ingenious piece of apparatus with several microphones placed round the room so that one could walk about, and speech would be picked up wherever one was.

The recording section started automatically as soon as the microphones picked up speech, and it stopped as soon as there was silence.

For an hour or two this expensive toy delighted my Guv'nor, and he walked round the room making an extempore speech, and then playing it back, to hear himself. It was, I think, used seriously once or twice to try out a speech, but my Guv'nor soon tired of the thing, and after about a month it was never used again.

Scores of stories of Sir Winston's witty remarks are purely legendary. The more cruel ones are definitely false for he is a man without rancour and venom, and he certainly would not make some of the comments attributed to him.

"He is a sheep in sheep's clothing" and "this speech contained every cliche except 'God is Love' and 'please adjust your dress before leaving,'" attributed to him as

remarks about a Socialist minister; and "There but for the grace of God goes God," supposed to have been said when Sir Stafford Cripps walked through the smoking room of the House of Commons, are too cheap, too irreverent, and too contrived to be real Churchilliana.

When he had an acid but humorous comment to make it was made in public. He did tell the whole House, and thereby the whole nation, that he had "waited fifty years to see a circus freak, the Boneless Wonder," and that he now saw him sitting on the Treasury Bench (a reference to Ramsay MacDonald).

Extreme provocation was necessary to stir him to bitterness like that.

Most of his victims, I think, had a sort of uncomfortable enjoyment in being singled out for attention. There was never the bludgeon of cheap sarcasm, but the less painful if more penetrating shaft of wit.

Mr. Woodrow Wyatt, the Socialist, in his time asked by Mr. Churchill with mock weariness "Still alive?" and constantly lambasted for his questions on defence, summed up the attitude of all the targets for Churchill wit when, after Sir Winston's illness in 1953, he rose at question time to say:

"May I ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that the House of Commons is a duller place without him?"

The Man at Work

I HAVE left to last my memories of the man everyone knows—statesman, speechmaker, writer.

Millions of words have been written to eulogise and criticise Sir Winston in these roles. The whole world knows of his contribution to the history of this century; millions upon millions have hung breathless on to his words; hundreds of thousands have probably read every word of his major works, and ten times as many his newspaper articles and reported speeches.

Perhaps a glimpse of the preparatory work which goes into the projection of these parallel and yet quite distinct personalities will be as interesting to others as they were to me.

In the first of the three roles I prefer to use the word statesman instead of politician. During my term of employment I knew him as the Leader of the Opposition and as Prime Minister. Certain as he was of the rightness of his party he did not make capital out of his opponents' faults just for the sake of a party point.

At the end of the day, when he thought aloud about events in the House or news in the press, I do not recall his ever gloating over a crisis large or small which was the result of the Socialist Government's policy. He might bitterly criticise the actions which had brought it about, but glee at the fix his opponents were in I never saw.

Britain came first, and he was not prepared to rejoice in her injury because he was not responsible and had possibly forecast it. Similarly, when benefit was to be seen he willingly admitted the fact.

That was the reason why he was hurt more deeply than I ever saw at any other time by the charge before the October, 1951, election that he was a "warmonger." It staggered him that anyone could believe such a thing—and anyone who knows him or has read his books can understand his bewilderment.

He referred to it in a speech at Plymouth two days before the election.

"The Socialists somewhat shamefacedly, and the Communists brazenly make the charge that I am a warmonger. This is a cruel and ungrateful accusation. It is the opposite of the truth. If I remain in public life at this juncture it is because rightly or wrongly, but sincerely, I believe that I may be able to make an important contribution to the prevention of a third world war and to bring nearer that lasting peace settlement which the masses of the people of every race and in every land fervently desire. I pray indeed that I may have this opportunity. It is the last prize I seek to win."

That was part of one speech of many made in an exhausting but exciting election tour on the eve of his seventy-seventh birthday. He travelled up and down the country covering hundreds of miles a day.

Masses in the Stadium at Liverpool contrasted with the comparatively small number who could get into the assembly hall of a school at Loughton, Essex.

A party political broadcast was followed the next day with a recording to be broadcast in Ulster and a speech in his own constituency of Woodford.

Then on to the Town Hall at Huddersfield, with the following morning spent in preparing a speech to be made in Newcastle that night. Twenty-four hours later he was addressing a stormy meeting in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow.

"Red Glasgow" is, of course, always a challenge to

Conservative speakers. The Clydesiders have a tradition of doing doughty battle, and plenty of speakers dread the ordeal of speaking there.

But the Guv'nor loved to visit the great Scottish city. Its challenge stimulated him. There was none of the mealy-mouthed hostility which he hated, but open, honest criticism with a good bit of hearty vituperation which, I think, he regarded as fair armament for a political battle.

I remember when he had been to Glasgow in May, 1951, for a meeting of the Scottish Unionist Association the crowds at the station to see him off began singing "Will ye no' come back again?"—at first a few of the members of the local Conservative party and then taken up by everyone, porters and cab drivers included, who could not resist singing the traditional "hymn to hospitality" of their country.

Two or three demonstrators at the rear of the crowd pushed their way forward and held aloft a banner with a slogan suggesting that Mr. Churchill did precisely the opposite of the song. They got as big a smile and as friendly a wave as the others.

Next morning, when the Guv'nor was reading the newspapers he said to me: "Norman, how many demonstrators did you notice in that crowd at the station yesterday?"

I told him that from my vantage point in the train corridor I had watched five or six holding or guarding the banner.

"That's what I thought," he said, "but look here."

He showed me a copy of the *Daily Worker* which reported a "mass demonstration by Glasgow workers in protest at Churchill's presence."

He was amused.

In election campaigns, at meetings of political associations and of learned bodies I have heard the Guv'nor

make more than a hundred speeches—or have listened to their rehearsal and preparation.

Although the different audiences were often quite unlikely ever to meet I never remember one speech being repeated—not even partially. Even when the theme was the same a completely fresh argument would be developed. When it is realised that his usual address, during the 1951 election campaign for example, consisted of about 4,000 words, the amount of preparatory work may be imagined.

When Mr. Churchill writes a speech, he checks and rechecks it a dozen times. I cannot remember any, even those which were by comparison quite unimportant, taking less than a couple of days to prepare.

His own interest is in the exact and appropriate use of words and of the sound of them. He was one of those brilliant speakers and talented writers who realised that the written word is not necessarily the same as the spoken one.

His technique for a chapter in his book or for a letter or statement to be published in the press was quite different from that which he adopted in the case of a speech.

When he was quite satisfied with the style of his speech it would be checked for facts by George Christ, who we called the " Leslie Welch of politics."

After the facts and references had been checked in this way, it would be dictated once again and this gave my Guv'nor a chance of hearing for himself how it sounded.

Back it would come in script form and because there had possibly been an interval of an hour or two by then, he would again feel dissatisfied with it, and put it aside until he could muse over it in his bath.

When he had bathed and dressed, he would call for a secretary and yet again the words would be altered.

I have read somewhere that genius is the capacity

to take infinite pains, and this can certainly be said about Sir Winston in his preparation of his speeches.

Even when he himself was satisfied with it, he still wanted the views of someone whom he regarded as his most reliable critic—his wife. The speech was sent after he had completed it to his own satisfaction to her to read and she would either return it with the few notes jotted on a piece of paper attached to it, or come in and make her criticism in person. I might add that he invariably accepted her criticism.

The speech was typed in a special typewriter with Large Primer type. Some of it—or even all in a short but specially important one—would look rather like poetry at first glance.

Thus the script of one of his famous war time broadcasts would have appeared like this:

We shall not fail or falter.
We shall not weaken or tire.
Neither the sudden shock of battle.
nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion
will wear us down.
Give us the tools
—And we will finish the job.

It is said that in his younger days Mr. Churchill used to leave spaces in his script where he expected cheers and "hear hears."

Maybe this was an exaggeration to describe the care he took; he certainly used underlining, capitals and spaced lettering to mark words and sentences to be stressed or spoken at a slower tempo.

During the war he mastered the technique of broadcasting, although I do not think he really liked sitting alone in a studio, for he missed the stimulation of a visible audience.

His broadcast on the death of King George VI—made

from a small waiting room at No. 10 Downing Street, which was a room usually turned into a studio for such broadcasts—is among his most famous.

My Guv'nor was so completely desolated by the sudden death of the King that I think for once it took all his resolution to go through the normal routine of preparation, correction and rehearsal of his speech.

Broadcasts are, of course, doubly exacting because they have to fit to an exact time, and have to be rehearsed for that purpose.

Mr. Churchill with his love for words and the need to use them to the best advantage, has always found it somewhat difficult to cut them or increase them in order to meet the requirements of time or space, but this broadcast was, of course, among the greatest triumphs of his career.

As the time approached for it, he had to some measure managed to control his emotions, and he devoted himself with an uncanny single-mindedness to the task in hand.

The only person he permitted to visit him that evening was Mr. Anthony Eden, but in order to check beyond all doubt that despite the strain of the past hours his voice would not falter, he agreed to have some routine treatment from a throat specialist.

My Guv'nor is an emotional man, but he does not easily show his emotions. When he is deeply moved he is not ashamed to weep. He wept on that morning when the news of the King's death came through. I am told that he wept at the subsequent Cabinet meeting, and he managed to fight back his tears at London Airport only until the new Queen, who had flown back day and night from Africa, had entered her car.

Of course writing speeches and preparing statements were not really tasks to him. He was proud of his craft and would, I think, have written for his own pleasure if

nothing was ever printed and no word of it spoken in public.

" I've been a journalist, and for half my lifetime I have earned my living by selling words, and, I hope, thoughts," I heard him say at an Ottawa press conference during his Canadian tour of January 1952.

But words were not used just for the fun of it.

During the days after he became Prime Minister again, I heard him dictating memo after memo to his secretaries—" Churchill's Prayers " as they were called, because they always ended " Pray give me the facts on half a sheet of paper."

As the paragraph above had probably demanded an appreciation of the position in some vast industry, or a résumé of the political situation involving half a dozen countries, the terror of civil servants who preferred to disguise their lack of knowledge in a stream of verbose officialese can be imagined.

And woe was on the head of the unhappy Whitehall official who started his reply: " I am informed that. . ."

The Guv'nor let him know that this phrase did not relieve him of the responsibility for what followed, which was of course, the reason it had been used.

A goodly part of my Guv'nor's admiration and regard for Lord Beaverbrook was, I am certain, due to the victories the famous newspaper proprietor had achieved over red tape during the war when he took over aircraft production.

" I needed his vital and vibrant energy," Mr. Churchill recalled in describing how he appointed Lord Beaverbrook to the post immediately after he became Prime Minister in 1940.

Once, when the Guv'nor was grumbling about some pedantic effort of a civil servant, he recounted to me that Lord Beaverbrook had had an effective system with red tape during the war.

" He used to tell officials who said things had to be done in such-and-such a way: 'Wherever I find organisation I break it,' " he said with a reminiscent smile.

In times of stress Lord Beaverbrook was without doubt the colleague my Guv'nor had always liked to have sooner than any other. In the first world war they had worked together in face of tremendous jealousies and opposition from powerful political opponents; in the second the opposition was not so great but the task was more formidable.

They both believed, if my own judgment from remarks Mr. Churchill made is correct, that in times of crisis they were the only men who could achieve the impossible. And in fairness it must be said that events twice proved them right. Curiously enough, their temperaments were different except in this sense of their own destiny.

Returning to the subject of Mr. Churchill's steady war against inefficiency and useless practices in the civil service, I was always hearing and seeing examples of his campaign against the misuse of the English language in the adoption of synthetic words so popular in many Ministries.

" Short words are the best and old words the best of all " was his motto.

I have heard him condemn " lower income group " as a euphemism for " poor," and " accommodation units " for " homes." He hated the words " adumbrated " and " co-ordination."

Once, in the house, even his great friend, Mr. Butler was gently rebuked when he talked of " commercial vehicles " by the Guv'nor's short interruption: " lorries."

Economy of words, and the use of simple words were doubtless inspired by his love of the English language. It was also a means of saving time and in the Churchill design for living there was little time to waste.

This is only too obvious for any Prime Minister but is perhaps not so clear in the case of Statesman in Opposition.

But any party leader, and naturally in Mr. Churchill's case it was doubly true, there is an enormous amount of routine work which puts a heavy strain on him and his staff.

I don't suppose there was ever a week during the whole time that I worked for Mr. Churchill that the number of letters from the general public did not exceed 300-400. The moment the date of a general election was announced the number shot up to 1,000.

Except for the comparatively few in number which are anonymous or from obvious cranks all were dealt with, and most were answered.

My Guv'nor's faith in democracy far exceeded his interest in his own political party. I remember an incident before the General Election which brought the Conservative Party back into power in October 1951. We were of course at Hyde Park Gate so as to be on the spot on Election Day. He said to me as I served his breakfast on the day before the election:

"What are you doing about your vote? Have you arranged to vote by post, or are you registered up here?"

I replied that as a resident of Chartwell I would have to vote down there, but being in London I would not trouble about it.

"But you must vote," he said firmly. "It doesn't matter for which party you vote so long as you do so. I will arrange for you to be sent down there so you can go to the Polls."

My Guv'nor was perfectly well aware that it was very unlikely that I would vote Conservative.

He knew also that with the very large majority in the constituency, my vote would not be of the slightest importance, but that did not matter to him. My vote

was a token of an unimportant valet's contribution to the government of a democratic country. It was a duty as well as a privilege.

He was always talking insistently on this theme of the need to take an active part in the country's politics. Among the secretarial staff there were those with an intellectual trend to the left, and certainly among the farm people there were professed Socialists and lifelong Liberals.

My Guv'nor used to take a delight in arguing with them, and he respected them the more for speaking out about their beliefs. I also suspect that he used to restrain his own powers of debate so that the battle was the more equal.

He respected these unimportant political adversaries for their honesty.

For those who deemed it wisest to have one political belief but to profess another in his presence, he had nothing but contempt. I remember that for a time we had a police officer who was known to be a Socialist, and in fact had indeed been reported as one in a Swiss newspaper as an example of the truly democratic way of life in the Churchill menage, but for some reason this officer, whose job was, of course, perfectly safe, and it could not affect his career whether my Guv'nor liked or disliked him, went out of his way to express a sycophantic adherence to the Conservative Party.

"I shall be voting for your party, sir, when the time comes," he once said. He got a silent glare instead of a word of thanks.

As the months of 1952 passed by I saw my beloved Guv'nor tackle "the bloody mess" he had told me we were in on that night that he knew he was Prime Minister again, and I saw his tenacity remorselessly succeeding.

Despite all the upheavals of a world divided into two armed camps and the economic troubles of our own

nation, they were months of promise. The Guv'nor was happy. He looked forward to the Coronation as an early milestone of a new Elizabethan Age.

For me, the most inspiring job I shall ever have was to end. Domestic reasons made it, at first difficult, and then humanly impossible, to be so constantly absent from my own home and family as personal attendance on the phenomenon of human energy who was my Guv'nor demanded.

I left before the climax of his active career came with his title and his semi-retirement. In a way I am glad it was so. I prefer to remember the Guv'nor as history will without doubt do—as Mr. Churchill, an Englishman.